

DIALOGUES

OF THE

D E A D.

BY THE LATE

M. D E F E N E L O N,

PRECEPTOR TO THE INFANTS OF

FRANCE, AND ARCHBISHOP-

DUKE OF CAMBRAY.

A NEW TRANSLATION.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

VOLUME SECOND.

B E R W I C K :

P R I N T E D F O R R. T A Y L O R.

M D C C L X X .



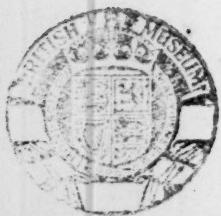
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VOLUME THE SECOND.

DIALOGUE XXXII.

CAMILLUS AND FABIUS
MAXIMUS.

Honesty is the best policy.

FABIUS.

IT belongs to Minos, and the other two judges to settle our ranks, since you will not yield to me: they shall decide the matter, and I believe them just enough to prefer those great actions of the Punic war, when the commonwealth was now powerful, and admired by all distant nations, to the petty wars of infant Rome, during which the fighting was always at the gates of the city.

CAMILLO.

They will have no great difficulty to decide between a Roman, who was five times dictator, tho' never consul, who triumphed four times, who deserved the title of Second Founder of Rome, and another citizen, who did but spin out the time by cunning, and fly before Hannibal.

FABIUS.

I deserved the title of Second Founder better than you: for Hannibal and the whole power of the Carthaginians, from which I delivered Rome, were still more formidable than the incursion of a mob of barbarians, which you dispersed. You will be hard put to it, when you come to compare the taking of Veii, which was but a village, with that of the lofty

and warlike Tarentum, that second Lacedemon, whereof it was a colony.

C A M I L L U S.

The siege of Veii was of greater consequence to the Romans than that of Tarentum. One must not judge by the size of the city, but by the mischief it occasioned to Rome. Veii was then stronger in proportion for Rome in her infant-state, than Tarentum was afterwards for Rome, that had increased her power by such a series of success.

F A B I U S.

But that petty town of Veii you were ten years in taking, the siege lasted as long as that of Troy; and therefore you entered Rome after that conquest in a triumphal car drawn by four white horses: you must needs make vows too in order to obtain that mighty success; you promised the gods the tithe of the booty. Upon this promise they enabled you to take the town; but it was no sooner taken than you forgot your benefactors, and gave the plunder to the soldiers, though one would think the gods deserved the preference.

C A M I L L U S.

Such faults are committed without any ill intention, in the transport of a new-gained victory: but the Roman ladies paid my vow; for they gave all the gold of their jewels to make a cup weighing eight talents, which was offered in the temple of Delphi. Wherefore the senate ordered a public eulogium to be made on each of these generous women after their death.

F A B I U S.

I consent to their eulogium, but by no means to yours. For you broke your vow, and they fulfilled it.



CAMILLO.

None can tax me with having ever been guilty of a willing breach of faith. I gave one good proof of my honour.

FABIUS.

I see our school-master afar off coming with his trite story.

CAMILLO.

Think not to make a jest of it; the school-master does me no small honour. The Falerians had, after the manner of the Greeks, employed a man acquainted with letters to educate their children in common, to the end that society, emulation, and the maxims of public spirit might render them still more children of the republic than of their parents. The traitor came and delivered up the whole children of the Falerians to me. I now had the people wholly at my mercy, by possessing so precious hostages; but I detested both the traitor and the treachery; I did not do like those who are honest but by halves, and love the treason though they hate the traitor. I commanded the lictor to tear the school-master's cloaths from off his back; I caused his hands to be tied behind him, and I charged the children to whip him all the way back to their city. Was not that honourable dealing? What think you, Fabius?

FABIUS.

I think that action glorious, and that it does you more honour than the taking of Veii.

CAMILLO.

But do you know the sequel? It plainly shews what virtue does, and how far generosity is even better policy than cunning.

FABIUS.

Did not the Falerians, touched with your beha-

viour, send ambaffadors to you, in order to throw themselves and their city at your discretion, saying, They could do nothing better for their country than submit it to a man so just, and so great an enemy to treachery?

C A M I L L U S.

'Tis true they did: but I sent their ambaffadors to Rome for the decision of the senate and people.

F A B I U S.

You feared the envy and jealousy of your fellow-citizens.

C A M I L L U S.

Had I not reason? The more we practise virtue beyond others, the more ought we to fear provoking their jealousy. Besides, I owed that deference to the commonwealth; however, they would give no decision, but sent back the ambaffadors to me, and I finished the affair with the same generous procedure with which I had begun it. I left the Falerians at liberty to govern themselves according to their own laws, and concluded with them a just peace, and honourable for their city.

F A B I U S.

I have heard that the soldiers of your army were highly enraged at the peace, for they expected a great booty.

C A M I L L U S.

Was I not to prefer Rome's glory and my own honour to the covetousnefs of the soldiers?

F A B I U S.

I allow it. But to return to our question: you do not know, perhaps, that I have given stronger proofs of probity than you did in the affair of your school-master.

C A M I L L U S .

No; I do not know it, nor indeed can I believe it.

F A B I U S .

I had agreed with Hannibal about an exchange of prisoners, and that those who could not be exchanged should be ransomed at the rate of two hundred and fifty drachms a man. The exchange ended, it proved that there were over the number of Carthaginian prisoners, two hundred and fifty Romans to be ransomed. The senate disapproves my treaty, and refuses payment: whereupon I sent my son to Rome to sell my estate, and paid at my own expence all the ransoms which the senate would not. You were generous only at the charge of the republic; but I was so upon my own expence: what you did was only in concert with the senate; what I did was in opposition to the senate itself.

C A M I L L U S .

It is no hardship for a man of spirit to sacrifice a little money, in order to purchase so much glory. For my part I shewed my generosity by saving my ungrateful country. But for me, the Gauls had not even left you a city of Rome to defend. Come, let us go before Minos, that he may put an end to our dispute, and ascertain our ranks.



DIALOGUE XXXIV.

FABIUS MAXIMUS AND HANNIBAL.

A general ought to sacrifice his reputation to the public safety.

HANNIBAL.

I HAVE caused you many a forry day and sleepless night. Have I not? own it honestly.

FABIUS.

"Tis true: but I had my revenge.

HANNIBAL.

Not much of that neither: you did nothing but retire before me, and seek inaccessible encampments upon the mountains; you were ever in the clouds. It was but a bad way to retrieve the Roman reputation, to betray so much fear.

FABIUS.

One must always mind the main chance. After the loss of so many battles, I had compleated the republic's ruin, had I hazarded fresh engagements. It was expedient to raise the spirits of our troops, to accustom them to your arms, to your elephants, to your stratagems, to your order of battle; to let you dissolve in the pleasures of Capua, and to wait till you wasted away your strength by degrees.

HANNIBAL.

But in the mean time you dishonoured yourself by your timorousness. A fine resource for a country after so many calamities, is a captain, who dares to attempt nothing, who, like a hare, starts at his

own shadow, who finds no rocks steep enough for his ever-guilty troops to clamber over! This was cherishing the cowardice in your camp, and increasing the courage in mine.

FABIUS.

It was better to dishonour one's self by such cowardice than to cause the whole flower of the Romans to be cut off, as Terentius Varro did at Cannae. What tends to save one's country, and to render the enemies victories fruitless, can never dishonour a captain. The world sees he has preferred the public safety to his own reputation, which is dearer to him than life, and that sacrifice of his reputation must needs acquire him a great one. Tho' indeed his reputation is not in question, there is no danger of any thing but the rash censures of certain critics, who have not extensive enough views to see how far that slow manner of making war may prove advantageous in the end. One must even let people be talking, who consider only what is present and palpable. When once by your patience you have obtained a good success, the very persons who have most condemned you will be the most forward in your applause. They judge only by the success. Do but succeed, and they will load you with encomiums.

HANNIBAL.

But what should your allies think?

FABIUS.

I let them think what they pleased, so I saved Rome; rightly judging that I should be cleared from all their censures, when I had got the better of you.

HANNIBAL.

Of me! you never once had that glory. I shewed that I could laugh at all your military skill;

for with fires fastened to the horns of a great number of oxen, I gave you the slip, and decamped in the night, while you still imagined me hard by your camp.

FABIUS.

Those stratagems may deceive any body, but they are no wise decisive in the case betwixt us. In a word, you cannot disown but I weakened you, retook some strong-holds, and retrieved the disasters of the Roman troops. And had not the young Scipio robbed me of the glory, I had driven you out of Italy. If Scipio accomplished it, 'twas because there was still a Rome saved by the wisdom of Fabius. Cease therefore to laugh at a man who by giving a little ground before you, was the cause of your forsaking Italy, and occasioned the fall of Carthage. 'Tis of small moment to dazzle by disadvantageous beginnings, the main matter is to end well.



DIALOGUE XXXV.

RHADAMANTHUS, CATO THE CENSOR, AND SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

The greatest virtues are sullied by a cross and censorious passion.

RHADAMANTHUS.

WHOM art thou, old Roman? Tell me thy name. Thou hast but an ominous physiognomy, a stern and snappish countenance. Thou lookest like an ugly, stupid fellow; at least I suppose thou hast been such in thy youth. Thou hast

been, if I mistake not, upwards of an hundred when thou diedst.

CATO.

No; I was but fourscore and ten, and I thought my life very short: for I liked vastly to live, and enjoyed a course of perfect good health. My name is Cato; hast thou never heard of me, of my wisdom, of my courage against the wicked?

RHADAMANTHUS.

O! I could easily know thee by the picture given me of thee. Ay, 'tis just thyself, the very same person, ever ready to praise himself and to snarl at others. But I have a difference to settle between thee and the great Scipio who vanquished Hannibal. So ho, Scipio, make haste and come hither: here is Cato come at last, I purpose to judge your old quarrel immediately. Stand forth then, and let each plead his own cause.

SCIPIO.

As for me, I have to complain of the malicious jealousy of Cato; it was unworthy of his high reputation: he sided with Fabius Maximus, and was his friend for no other reason but in order to attack me. He wanted to prevent my passing into Africa. They were both timorous in their politics. Besides, Fabius knew only his old method of spinning out the war, of avoiding battles, of encamping in the clouds, of waiting till the enemies should waste themselves away. Cato, who out of pedantry loved old people, adhered to Fabius, and grew jealous of me, because I was young and daring. But the principal reason of his prejudice was his avarice: he would have the war carried on frugally, as he planted his cabbages and onions. I again was for having it waged with vigour, in order to bring it to

a speedy and prosperous conclusion; and was desirous that the public should consider, not what it would cost, but the actions I would perform. Poor Cato was quite forlorn, for he wanted always to govern the republic as he did his cottage, and to gain victories at a reasonable rate. He did not see that Fabius' design would not succeed; never would he have driven Hannibal out of Italy. Hannibal was dexterous enough to subsist in it at the country's expence, and to preserve allies. He would also have brought over continual supplies of fresh troops from Africa by sea. Had not Nero defeated Asdrubal before he could join his brother, all had been gone. The dastard Fabius had been without resource; and Rome so pressed by such an enemy, must needs have yielded at the last. But Cato did not see that necessity of making a powerful diversion, in order to carry to Carthage the war, which Hannibal had found means to transport to Rome. I therefore demand reparation for all the wrongs Cato hath done me, and for the persecutions he hath raised against my family.

CATO.

And I demand reward for having maintained justice and the public good against thy brother Lueius, who was a robber. Let us drop the African war, wherein thou wert more happy than wise; and let us come to the point. Was it not a base thing in thee, to extort from the commonwealth the command of an army for thy brother, who was incapable of it? Thou didst promise to follow him, and to serve under him. Thou wert his pedagogue in that war against Antiochus. Thy brother committed all manner of injustice and extortion. Thou didst

shut thine eyes, that thou mightst not see it. A brotherly fondness had blinded thee.

SCIPIO.

How! did not that war end gloriously? The great Antiochus was defeated, expelled and repulsed from the coasts of Asia. This was the last enemy that could dispute the royal power with us. After him all kingdoms fell one upon another at the Romans' feet.

CATO:

'Tis true, Antiochus might have given trouble enough, had he taken Hannibal's counsel: but he only trifled his time away, and dishonoured himself by lewd pleasures. He married a young Greek in his old age. Then it was Philopemen said, that had he been protector of the Achaeans, he would easily have routed the whole army of Antiochus, by surprizing them in the tippling-houses. Thy brother, and thou, Scipio, had no great difficulty to overcome enemies who had already overcome themselves by their sensuality and effeminacy.

SCIPIO.

The power of Antiochus was however formidable.

CATO.

But let us return to our point. Did not Lucius, thy brother, rob, plunder, ravage? Wouldst thou have the face to say that he governed like an honest man?

SCIPIO.

After my death thou hadst the barbarity to condemn him in a fine, and wouldst have had him seized by lictors.

CATO.

He well deserved it. And thou who hadst —

S C I P I O.

As for me, I plucked up a spirit, when I saw the people turning against me. Instead of answering the ~~accusation~~, I said: Come, let us go to the Capitol, and thank the gods that on a day like this I overcame Hannibal and the Carthaginians. After which I exposed myself no more to the caprice of fortune. I retired to Linternum, far from an ungrateful country, where I lived in a quiet solitude, respected by all men of honour, and waited death like a philosopher. This it was that Cato the implacable Censor obliged me to: and this it is for which I ask justice.

C A T O.

Thou reproachest me with what constitutes my glory. I spared no body in point of justice. I made the most illustrious Romans quake. I saw how manners were daily growing more corrupt through pride and pleasures. For instance, can I be refused immortal praises for having expelled the senate Lucius Quinctius (who had been Consul, and was brother to Titus Flaminius the conqueror of Philip king of Macedon) who had the cruelty to cause a man be put to death before a young boy whom he loved, in order to gratify the child's curiosity with so dreadful a spectacle.

S C I P I O.

I grant that action was just, and that thou didst often punish the guilty. But thou wert too severe against every body; and when thou hadst done a good action, thou boastedst of it too grossly. Dost thou remember thy having formerly said, that Rome owed more to thee than thou owedst to Rome? Such a speech was foolish in the mouth of a man of gravity.

RHADAMANTHUS.

What answerest thou, Cato, to this charge?

CATO.

That I actually supported the Roman republic against the softness and pride of the women, who corrupted its manners; that I kept the great in awe of the laws; that I practised myself what I taught others; and that the commonwealth did not in return take my part against those I had made my enemies only for her sake. As my estate lay in the neighbourhood of that of Manius Curius, I proposed from my youth to imitate that great man in simplicity of manners, while, on the other hand, I took Demosthenes for my model of eloquence; insomuch that I was even called the Latin Demosthenes. Every day was I seen going naked with my slaves to till the ground. But think not that this application to agriculture and eloquence diverted me from the military art. At the age of seventeen I shewed myself intrepid in the wars against Hannibal. Very early was my body covered with scars. When I was sent pretor into Sardinia, I abolished the luxury that all other pretors had introduced before me. I meant nothing but to ease the people, and to reject all bribes. Being made consul, I gained a battle in Spain, on this side the Betis, over the Barbarians. After this victory, I took more towns in Spain than I was days in it.

SCIPIO.

Another insupportable brag! but it is not new to us, for often hast thou made it, and many that have come hither within these twenty years have made me laugh with it. But, honest Cato, it is not before me thou shouldest talk so. I know Spain, and thy glorious conquests.

CATO.

It is certain, that four hundred towns surrendered to me almost at one and the same time, and thou never madest so many.

SCIPIO.

Carthage alone is more valuable than all thy four hundred villages.

CATO.

But what wilt thou say of my conduct under Maximus Acilius, in marching over such precipices, and surprising Antiochus in the mountains between Macedonia and Theffaly?

SCIPIO.

I approve that action, and it were unjust to refuse it commendations: they are all due to thee for having restrained evil manners; but nothing can excuse thy nigardly avarice.

CATO.

So thou talkest, because it was thou that didst accustom the soldiers to live delicately. But it must be considered, that I found myself in a commonwealth, which was daily growing more and more corrupted. Expences increased without measure; a fish gave now more money than an ox had done when I entered upon public affairs. 'Tis true, that things at the lowest price to me appeared still too dear, when they were of no use. I said to the Romans: What avails it you to govern nations, if your vain and corrupted women govern you? Was I in the wrong to speak thus, when they lived in so shameless a manner? Every one ruined himself, and stuck at no baseness or dishonesty, to procure wherewithal to support his extravagant expences. I was censor; I had acquired some authority from my age and virtue; how then could I hold my tongue?

SCIPIO.

But why be still informer-general at fourscore and ten? A glorious employment for that age!

CATO.

'Tis the employment of a man who hath lost none of his vigour, or of his zeal for the common weal, and who sacrificeth himself for its sake to the hatred of the great, who want to lead disorderly lives with impunity.

SCIPIO.

But thou hast been accused as often as thou hast accused others. Thou hast been so, I think, as good as threescore and ten times, and that at the age of fourscore years.

CATO.

'Tis true; and I glory in it. It was not possible but the wicked should by calumnies wage a continual war against a man, who never passed them any thing.

SCIPIO.

Thou hadst thy own difficulties to defend thyself against the last accusations,

CATO.

I confess it, and is it any wonder? 'Tis very hard to give account of one's whole life before men of another age. I was a poor old man exposed to the insults of the youth, who thought I doted, and who counted all I had done formerly as fables. When I would at any time be relating it, they did nothing but gape and laugh at me as an eternal Egotist.

SCIPIO.

They were not far in the wrong. But after all, why wert thou so fond of reprehending others? Thou wert like a snarling cur that barks at all who go past.

C A T O.

I found all my life, that I learned much more by reproving fools, than by conversing with the wife. The wife are such but by halves, and give but faint lessons; but fools are thoroughly fools, and a person has but to see them to know how he should not behave.

S C I P I O.

I grant it. But thou who wert so wise, why wert thou at first such an enemy to the Greeks?

C A T O.

Because I was afraid the Greeks would communicate to us their art much more than their wisdom, and their dissolute manners than their sciences. I did by no means like all those musicians, poets, painters, sculptors: all that tends only to an idle curiosity, and a voluptuous life. I thought it better to keep our rustic simplicity, our laborious and sober life in agriculture, to be more unpolished, and to live better, to talk less about virtue, and to practise it more.

S C I P I O.

Why then didst thou afterwards take so much trouble in thy old age to learn the Greek tongue?

C A T O.

I at last suffered myself to be enchanted by the Syrens, like the rest. I listened to the Grecian muses. But I am much afraid all those little Greek sophisters that come starving to Rome to make their fortune will complete the corruption of the Roman manners.

S C I P I O.

Thy fears are not groundless: but thou shouldst also have been afraid of corrupting the Roman manners by thy avarice.

C A T O .

I avaritious! I was a good husband; I wanted to let nothing be lost, and yet I spent too much.

R H A D A M A N T H U S .

O! the plain language of avarice, which thinks itself always prodigal.

S C I P I O .

Was it not scandalous for thee to forsake agriculture, in order to run into the most infamous usury? Thou thoughtst, towards thy latter days, as I have heard, that thy lands and flocks did not yield thee a sufficient income; and so didst turn usurer. Was that a trade for a Cenfor, who wanted to reform the city? What hast thou now to answer?

R H A D A M A N T H U S .

Thou darest not speak, and I plainly see that thou art guilty. This is a cause pretty difficult to judge. I must, my friend Cato, at once punish and reward thee. Thou puzzlest me vastly. Be this then my decision. I am touched with thy virtues and noble actions in behalf of the republic; but then what likelihood is there of an usurer's getting into the Elysian fields? No: that were too great a scandal. Thou shalt remain therefore, if it please thee, at the gate. But thy consolation shall be to keep others out also. Thou shalt controll all who present themselves. Thou shalt be censor here below as thou wast at Rome. Thou shalt have for smaller gratifications all the virtues of mankind to carp at. I deliver up to thee Lucius Scipio, Lucius Quintius, and all the rest, on whom to vent thy wrath. Thou mayst also exercise it upon the other defuncts, who shall croud from all quarters of the world, Roman citizens, great captains, barbarous kings, tyrants of nations: all shall be subject to thy spleen

and satyr. But beware of Lucius Scipio; for I appoint him to censure thee, in his turn, without mercy. Here is money for thee to lend to all the dead, who shall have none in their mouth to pay their passage of Charon's ferry. If thou lend it out to any upon usury, Lucius will not fail to inform me of it, nor I to punish thee as the most treacherous of villains.



DIALOGUE XXXVI.

SCIPIO AND HANNIBAL.

Virtue is its own reward.

HANNIBAL.

HERE are we two met again, as we were in Africa a short time before the battle of Zama.

SCIPIO.

"Tis true: but to-day's conference is very different from that other. We have no more glory to acquire, nor victory to obtain. We have now nothing remaining but a vain and faint shadow of what we have been, with a dream-like remembrance of our adventures. "Tis this makes Hannibal and Scipio friends. The same gods who laid Carthage in the dust, have reduced to a few ashes the conqueror of Carthage whom you behold.

HANNIBAL.

Undoubtedly it hath been in your solitude of Linternum, that you learned all this fine philosophy.

SCIPIO.

Though I had not learned it in my retreat, I

should here. For death gives the strongest lessons of the vanity of all that the world most admires.

HANNIBAL.

Disgrace and retirement have not been without their use towards your making these wise reflexions.

SCIPIO.

I allow it: but you have, no less than I, had those instructions from fortune. You were witness to the fall of Carthage, were fain to abandon your country, and after making Rome tremble, were forced to fly its vengeance, by wandering from place to place, like a vagabond.

HANNIBAL.

'Tis true: but I did not abandon my country till I could no longer defend her, and till she could no longer protect me. I quitted her in order to prevent her utter destruction, and that I might not see her thraldom. You, on the contrary, were forced to leave your country at her highest pitch of glory, and that glory she derived from you. Can ought be harder! What ingratitude!

SCIPIO.

That we must expect from men, even when we serve them best. Those who do good out of ambition, are never content. Sooner or later fortune still betrays them, and men they find ungrateful. But when we do good for the love of virtue, the virtue we love does always sufficiently recompence by the delight there is in following it, and makes us despise all other rewards, of which we are deprived.



DIALOGUE XXXVII.

SCIPIO AND HANNIBAL.

Ambition has no limits.

SCIPIO.

METHINKS I am still at our conference before the battle of Zama; but we are not here in the same situation, being no longer at variance. All our wars are extinguished in the waters of the river Lethe; after having each of us conquered so many provinces, a little urn serves to collect our ashes.

HANNIBAL.

All that is true. Our past glory is now but a dream, we here have nothing to conquer: for my part, I grow weary of this inactive state.

SCIPIO.

You must grant, you were restless and insatiable.

HANNIBAL.

Why so! I think I was very moderate.

SCIPIO.

Moderate! What moderation! At first the Carthaginians thought only of maintaining themselves in the western part of Sicily. The wise king Ge-lo, and then the tyrant Dionysius, had given them a good deal of exercise.

HANNIBAL.

True; but after we thought to subdue all those flourishing cities, which were governed like so many republics, as Leontum, Agrigentum, and Selinus.

S C I P I O .

But in short, the Romans and Carthaginians lying over against each other, with the sea between, looked upon each other, with a jealous eye, and disputed the island of Sicily, which lay in the middle betwixt the two pretending nations. This sure was the boundary of your ambition.

H A N N I B A L .

By no means: we had also our pretensions on the side of Spain. New Carthage gave us in that country an empire almost equal to that of the old in the heart of Afric.

S C I P I O .

All that is true: but it was in some part for your trade that you first established yourselves on the Spanish coast. The commodiousness you there found inspired you gradually with the design of conquering those extensive countries.

H A N N I B A L .

At the time of our first war with the Romans, we were powerful in Spain, and had soon been masters of it, but for your commonwealth.

S C I P I O .

In fine, the treaty which we concluded with the Carthaginians forced them to renounce all the countries that lie between the Pyrenees and the Ebro.

H A N N I B A L .

Force reduced us to that scandalous peace. We had suffered great losses both by sea and land. My father, who turned all his thoughts towards retrieving our unhappy circumstances, made me swear at the altars, when but nine years old, to be, to the day of my death, an irreconcilable enemy to the Romans. I swore it; I fulfilled it. I attended my

father into Spain: after his death I commanded the Carthaginian army, and you know what happened.

S C I P I O .

Yes I know it, and you too know it to your cost. But if you made considerable progress, it was because you found fortune every where coming to meet you, and inviting you to follow her. The hopes of joining the Gauls, our ancient enemies, induced you to cross the Pyrenees. The victory you gained over us upon the Rhone encouraged you to pass the Alps. You there lost a vast number of soldiers, horses, and elephants. When you had passed, you easily routed our frightened troops, whom you surprized at Ticinum. One victory draws on another by damping the spirits of the vanquished, and procuring many allies to the victors; for all the petty nations of the country flock always to the strongest side.

H A N N I B A L .

But what think you of the battle of Trebia?

S C I P I O .

It was no hard purchase, coming upon the back of so many others. After that you were master of Italy. Thrasymenus and Cannae were rather fields of blood than of battle. You pierced through all Italy: now speak ingenuously, did you at first expect so great success?

H A N N I B A L .

I did not know how far I might go; but I had a mind to try my fortune. I disconcerted the Romans by so bold and unforeseen a push. When I found fortune so favourable, I thought I ought to improve her kindness. Success inspired me with designs, which I should never have presumed to conceive.

SCIPIO.

Well, is not that what I was saying? Sicily, Spain, Italy, were now nothing to you. The Greeks with whom you had confederated would soon have bended under your yoke.

HANNIBAL.

But did not you, who speak, do precisely what you reproach us with having been capable of doing? Spain, Sicily, Carthage itself, and Afric were nothing: quickly all Greece, Macedon, all the Islands, Egypt, and Asia fell at your feet: and you had even great difficulty to suffer the Parthians and Arabians to be free. The whole universe was now too small for those Romans, who for the space of five hundred years had been confined to vanquish round about their city the Volsci, the Sabines and the Samnites.



DIALOGUE XXXVIII.

SYLLA, CATILINE, AND CÆSAR.

*The fatal consequences of vice do not reclaim corrupt
ed princes.*

SYLLA.

ICome in haste to give you an advice, Cæsar, and I have brought a very good second to persuade you; Catiline by name. You know him, and were but too much of his cabal. Don't be afraid of us; ghosts do no harm.

CÆSAR.

I could well dispense with your visit: your shapes are frightful, and your advice will perhaps be still more so. But what have you so pressing to tell me.

SYLLA.

That you must by no means aspire to tyranny.

CÆSAR.

Why so? did not you aspire to it yourself?

SYLLA.

Doubtless; and 'tis for that very reason we are the more to be minded, when we advise you to renounce it.

CÆSAR.

For my part, I resolve to imitate you in every thing; to aim at the tyranny as you aimed at it; and then to return, like you, from the other world, after my death, to undeceive the tyrants who shall follow me.

SYLLA.

This is not a time for your jokes and witticisms. We ghosts are for nothing but serious affairs. Let us come to the point. I voluntarily quitted the tyranny, and found my account in so doing. Catiline strove to arrive at it, and unhappily miscarried in the attempt. These are two very instructive examples for you.

CÆSAR.

I do by no means understand your fine examples. You first held the republic in chains, and then were silly enough to degrade yourself. After quitting the supreme power you lived disparaged, dispirited, obscure, useless. The fortunate man was abandoned by fortune. There now is one of your examples which I do not in the least understand.

As for the other, Catiline had a mind to make himself master, and so far he did well: but he did not rightly know how to take his measures; and so much the worse for him. For my part I shall attempt nothing, but with proper precaution.

C A T I L I N E.

I had taken the same measures you do. I flattered the youth; corrupted them by pleasures, engaged them in crimes, involved them in expences, and drowned them in debt. I got into power by means of the women of an intriguing and pragmatical spirit. Could you have done better?

C Æ S A R.

You talk of things I know nothing about. Every one does as he may.

C A T I L I N E.

'Tis yet in your power to avoid the rocks I split upon, and I am come to warn you of them.

S Y L L A.

For my part, I tell you again, that I found my account in renouncing public affairs before my death.

C Æ S A R.

Renounce public affairs! should one abandon the republic in its exigencies?

S Y L L A.

Ah! that is not what I mean: there is a wide difference between serving it and tyrannising over it.

C Æ S A R.

Why then did you cease to serve it?

S Y L L A.

Oh! you will not hear me. I say that a man should serve his country to the day of his death; but that he should neither aim at tyranny, nor maintain himself in it when attained.



DIALOGUE XXXIX.

CÆSAR AND CATO.

Despotic and tyrannical power is so far from securing the peace and authority of princes, that on the contrary it makes them wretched, and draws inevitable destruction upon them.

CÆSAR.

ALAS! my dear Cato, thou art in a miserable condition: what a frightful wound!

CATO.

I stabb'd myself at Utica after the battle of Thapsus, that I might not survive liberty: but thou whose compassion I move, how comes it that thou hast followed me so soon? What do I perceive! how many wounds on thy body! stay, let me count them: no less than three and twenty!

CÆSAR.

Thou wilt be very much astonished when I tell thee that I received so many stabs in the midst of the senate, from my best friends. What base treachery!

CATO.

No, I am not at all astonished at it: wast thou not the tyrant of thy friends as well as of the rest of thy citizens? Was it not their duty to lend an helping hand to the revenging of their oppressed country? They ought to have sacrificed not only their friend, but even their own brother, after the

example of Timoleon; and their own children, as did old Brutus.

CÆSAR.

One of his descendants has but too well followed that noble example : Brutus, whom I so much loved; Brutus, who passed for my own son; that very Brutus was head of the conspiracy against me.

CATO.

O happy Brutus ! who hath made Rome free, and hath immortalized his hands in the blood of a second Tarquin, more impious and proud than he whom Junius expelled.

CÆSAR.

Thou wert always prejudiced against me, and extreme in thy maxims of virtue.

CATO.

Who was it prejudiced me against thee ? Thy dissolute, prodigal, crafty, effeminate life ; thy debts, thy cabals, thy audaciousness : this it was that possessed Cato against that man, whose sash, trailing robe, and effeminate air, promised nothing worthy of the ancient customs : nor didst thou at all deceive me ; I knew thee from thy childhood. Oh ! had I been believed —

CÆSAR.

Thou wouldst have involved me in Catiline's conspiracy, in order to destroy me.

CATO.

Thou then didst live a woman's life, and wast a man only against thy country. What means did I not use to convict thee ? But Rome was running headlong to her ruin, and would not know her enemies.

CÆSAR.

Thy eloquence, I confess, alarmed me, and made

me have recourse to authority; yet canst thou not deny but I brought myself off like a clever fellow.

C A T O.

Say, like a clever villain. Thou didst dazzle the wisest by thy moderate and insinuating language; thou didst favour the conspirators upon pretence of not pushing rigour too far. I alone opposed, but to no purpose: from that time the gods were incensed against Rome.

CÆSAR.

Tell me now the truth: thou didst fear, after the battle of Thapsus, thy falling into my hands; thou wouldest have been horribly confounded to appear before me. But ah! knewest thou not that I wanted only to vanquish and to pardon?

C A T O.

'Twas the tyrant's pardon, 'twas life itself; yea, the life of Cato due to Cæsar that I dreaded: it was better to die than to see thee.

CÆSAR.

I would have used thee generously, as I did thy son. Hadst thou not better been still living for the succour and support of the republic?

C A T O.

There is no more republic, when there is no more liberty.

CÆSAR.

But should one therefore fall foul on one's self?

C A T O.

My own hands set me at liberty in spite of the tyrant, and I despised the life he had to proffer me. As for thee, thy own friends were forced to tear thee in pieces like a monster.

CÆSAR.

But if life was so shameful for a Roman after my

victory, why didst thou send me thy son? Hadst thou a mind to make him degenerate?

CATO.

Every one follows the dictates of his own heart in his choice to live or die: Cato could not but die; his son, not so great a man as he, might yet support life, and hope, by reason of his youth, to see freer and happier times. Alas! what did I not suffer, when I let my son go to the tyrant!

CÆSAR.

But why the tyrant? I never took the title of King.

CATO.

'Tis the thing, not the name, that is in question. Besides, how often wast thou seen to use various indirect arts to accustom the senate and people to the royalty. Antony himself, at the feast of the Lupercalia, had the impudence, under colour of a joke, to incircle thy head with a diadem. This joke looked too like earnest, and struck immediate horror. Thou didst easily perceive the public indignation, and so didst remit to Jove an honour which thyself did not dare to accept. This it was that fully determined the conspirators upon thy ruin. Well, have we not pretty good intelligence here below?

CÆSAR.

Too good: but thou dost not do me justice. My government was mild; I behaved myself like a true father of the country: of this one may judge from the grief the people testified after my death: that, you know, is a time, when flattery is no longer in season. Alas! poor folks! when my bloody robe was presented to them, how sanguine were they to revenge me! what were the regrets! what pomp in

the field of Mars at my funeral ! what hast thou now to answer ?

C A T O .

That the people is always the people, credulous, gross, capricious, blind, and an enemy to its real interest. For, having favoured the successors of the tyrant, and persecuted their deliverers, what hath that people not suffered ? How much of the purest blood of the citizens hath through numberless proscriptions streamed ! The Triumvirs were more barbarous than the very Gauls that took Rome. Happy he who hath not seen those days of desolation ! But now inform me, O tyrant, wherefore didst thou tear out the bowels of Rome, thy mother ? What reapest thou now from having enslaved thy country ? Was glory thy aim ? Shouldst thou not have found a purer and a brighter in preserving the liberty and greatness of that city, Mistress of the world, like Fabius, Fabricius, Marcellus, Scipio ? Or, if thou wantedst a pleasant and a happy life, didst thou find it in the horrors inseparable from tyranny ? Every day of thy life was as big with danger to thee, as that wherein so many citizens immortalized their virtue by butchering thee. The sight of every true Roman must needs have frightened thee. Was this then that tranquil and happy life which thou didst purchase at the price of so much trouble, and of so many crimes ? But what do I say ? Thou hast not even had time to enjoy the fruit of thine impiety. Speak, tyrant, speak ; 'tis now as much pain to thee to stand my looks, as it would have been to me to have born thy hated presence, when I embraced death at Utica. Say, if thou darest, that thou wast happy.

CÆSAR.

I own I was not: but it was such as thou that disturbed my happiness.

CATO.

Say rather thyself disturbed it. Hadst thou loved thy country, thy country would have loved thee: he whom his country loveth, hath no need of guards; his whole country watches round him. Real safety lies in doing nought but good, and in giving every body a concern in one's preservation. Thou wouldest reign, and make thyself dreaded. Well, thou didst reign, thou wast feared: but men delivered themselves from the tyrant and their fear together. So perish those, who wanting to be feared by all men, have themselves every thing to fear from all men, by making it their interest to be beforehand with them, and to deliver themselves from their tyranny.

CÆSAR.

But that power which thou callest tyrannical was become necessary. Rome could no longer maintain her liberty; and so must have a master. This Pompey was beginning to be, and I could not bear that he should be so to my prejudice.

CATO.

Thou shouldest have pulled down the tyrant, without aspiring to the tyranny. In short, if Rome was grown so dastardly as to be no longer able to want a master, thou hadst better have let that crime alone to another. When a traveller is like to fall into the hands of villains, who are preparing to rob him, ought a man to make haste to prevent them by committing so horrid an action? But the too great authority of Pompey served thee only for a pretence. Do not we know what thou saidst as thou wast going to Spain, in a petty town where several citizens

were soliciting the magistracy? Dost thou think we have forgot those Greek verses that were so often in thy mouth? Besides, if thou wast sensible of the misery and infamy of tyranny, why didst thou not quit it?

CÆSAR.

Ah! how was it possible to quit it? The ascent is steep and rugged; but there is no road to descend by; there is no getting out of it, but by falling over the precipice.

CATO.

Unhappy man, why then aspire to it? Why overturn every thing to attain it? Why spill so much blood, and not even spare thy own, which however was shed too late? Thou vainly seekest excuses.

CÆSAR.

And thou dost not answer me: I ask thee, how one can with safety quit the tyranny?

CATO.

Go ask Sylla the question, and now be silent: consult that blood-thirsty monster; his example will make thee blush. Farewel: I fear the indignation of Brutus's ghost, did it observe me speaking with thee.

CEASER AND CICERO *

DIALOGUE XL.

CATO AND CICERO.

The characters of these two philosophers, with a contrast of what was too outrageous and austere in the virtue of the one, and too weak in that of the other.

CATO.

GREAT orator, it is long since I expected you; 'tis a great while since you should have arrived: but you have come as late as you possibly could.

CICERO.

I am come after a death full of courage, I have fallen a victim to the republic; for ever since the time of Catiline's conspiracy, when I saved Rome, none could be an enemy to the commonwealth without declaring war against me.

CATO.

Yet I have understood you found favour with Cæsar by your abject submissions; that you lavished the highest encomiums upon him; that you were an intimate friend of all his reptile favourites, and that you even persuaded people in your letters to have recourse to his clemency in order to live tamely in the heart of Rome in slavery. Such the use of eloquence!

CICERO.

'Tis true I harangued Cæsar to obtain the pardon of Marcellus and Ligarius.

C A T O .

Ah! is it not better to be silent than to employ one's eloquence in flattering a tyrant? O Cicero! I had more art than you: I had the art to be silent, and to die.

C I C E R O .

You have not seen a fine observation I made in my Offices, which is, that every one ought to act up to his character. There are some men of a proud and untractable spirit, who ought to support that austere and violent virtue even unto death. It is not allowable for them to bear the fight of a tyrant; they have nothing for it but to kill themselves: on the other hand, there is a mild and more sociable virtue of certain moderate persons, who love the republic beyond their own glory: these ought to live, and to keep measure with the tyrant for the public good; they owe themselves to their citizens, and it is not lawful for them to complete their country's destruction by a precipitate death.

C A T O !

You have honestly discharged that duty; and if we are to judge of your love to Rome by your dread of death, I must own that Rome owes you a great deal. But persons that talk so fine, should so artfully make all their words correspond, as not to contradict themselves. That Cicero, who praised Cæsar to the skies, and who was not ashamed to pray the gods not to envy men so great a blessing; with what face could that Cicero afterwards say, That the murderers of Cæsar were the Deliverers of their country? What gross contradiction! what infamous baseness! Can the virtue of man be relied on, who truckles thus to the times?

C I C E R O .

It was expedient to accommodate one's self to the exigencies of the state. This compliance was still more justifiable than the war of Afric undertaken by Scipio and you, contrary to all the rules of prudence. For my part, I had foretold, as may be seen in my letters, that you would miscarry in it. But your inflexible and violent temper could suffer no moderate overtures, you were born for extremities.

C A T O .

And you to fear every thing. As you have frequently yourself confessed, you were capable of nothing but foreseeing inconveniences. The prevailing party brought you always over so far as to make you recant your former sentiments. Have you not been seen to admire Pompey, and exhort all your friends to give themselves up to him? Did you not afterwards think that Pompey would bring Rome into bondage, if he got the better of Cæsar? How, said you, will he ever trust honest men, when he is master, seeing he will not trust any of us during the war, wherein he stands in need of our assistance? In short, did you not admire Cæsar? Did you not court and praise Octavius?

C I C E R O .

But I attacked Antony : what can be more vehement than my harangues against him, like those of Demosthenes against Philip?

C A T O .

They are admirable ; but Demosthenes knew better than you how to die. Antipater could give him neither death nor life. Were you forced to fly as you did, without knowing whither you went,

and to wait death from the hands of Popilius? I did better to embrace it voluntarily at Utica.

C I C E R O .

And I think it better never to have despaired of the republic to my dying hour, and to have supported it by moderate counsels, than to have waged a weak and imprudent war, and quitted the field in a fit of despair.

C A T O .

Your negotiations turned out no better than my African war. For, Octavius, young as he was, played upon the great Cicero, who was the light of Rome: he made a tool of you in order to get into power; and then delivered you up to Antony. But you that talk of war, did you ever know ought about it? I have not yet forgot your glorious conquest of Pindenissus, a petty town in the streights of Cilicia, little harder to take than a sheepfold. For this noble expedition nothing less would serve you than a triumph. The supplications appointed by the senate were not sufficient for your exploits. You may remember my answer to the solicitations you made me upon that head: you ought to be better pleased, said I, with the commendations of the senate, which by your good conduct you have deserved, than with a triumph, which could less speak the virtue of the triumpher, than the success wherewith the gods had crowned his enterprizes. Thus do people endeavour, as they can, to amuse men that are vain, and not fit for judging for themselves.

C I C E R O .

I own I was always very fond of praise; but is it any wonder? Did I not richly deserve it by my consulship, by my public spirit, by my eloquence;

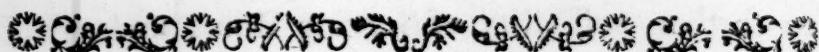
in short, by my taste for philosophy? When I saw no further possibility of serving Rome under her misfortunes, I consoled myself in an honest receipt, by writing upon virtue.

C A T O.

You had better practised it in time of danger, than wrote upon it. Come, own it fairly, you were but a mean copier of the Greeks. You blended Plato with Epicurus, the Old Academy with the New; and after playing the historian upon their precepts, in dialogues which were generally rather soliloquies, you could hardly ever bring any thing to a conclusion. You were ever a stranger to philosophy, and thought of nothing but adorning your wit with its beauties; in fine, you were always a waverer, both in politics and philosophy.

C I C E R O.

Cato, farewell: your ill humour carries you too far; to see you so full of spleen, one would be tempted to think that you regret the loss of life. For my part, that gives me no uneasiness, though I have not pretended to so much heroism. You have an overweening conceit of yourself, for having done in dying what a great many slaves have done, with as much courage as you.



DIALOGUE XLI.

CÆSAR AND ALEXANDER.

The characters of a tyrant and of a prince, who, born with the most excellent qualities for making a great king, gives up himself to his pride and passions. Both are the scourges of mankind; but the one is an object of compassion, whereas the other is the detestation of humanity.

ALEXANDER.

WH O is that Roman just now descended? He has got many a wound. Hah! I hear them saying it is Cæsar—I greet thee well, great Roman; the report went that thou wert going to conquer the Parthians, and to overcome the whole East: How come we to see thee here?

CÆSAR.

My friends murdered me in the senate-house.

ALEXANDER.

What! hadst thou become their tyrant, thou who wert but a private citizen of Rome?

CÆSAR.

It well becomes thee to talk so! Didst not thou make the unjust conquest of Asia? Didst not thou bring Greece into slavery?

ALEXANDER.

Yes: but the Greeks were a foreign people, and enemies to Macedon. I never did, like thee, enslave my own country; on the contrary, I gave the

Macedonians an everlasting glory with the empire of the whole East.

CÆSAR.

Thou didst conquer effeminate men, and then grew as effeminate as they. Thou seizedst the riches of the Persians; and the riches of the Persians, by corrupting thy heart, conquered thee. Hast thou brought down to Pluto's realms that mad pride, which made thee imagine thyself a god?

ALEXANDER.

I acknowledge my faults and follies. But does it become thee to upbraid me with my effeminacy? Who does not know thy infamous life in Bithynia, thy corruption at Rome, where thou obtainedst the highest honours merely by thy scandalous intrigues! but for thine infamous practices, thou hadst never been more than a private person in thy republic. It is true indeed thou wouldest have been still living.

CÆSAR.

Thou didst meet at Babylon from poison what I met at Rome from the sword.

ALEXANDER.

My captains could not poison me guiltless; thy fellow-citizens, by assassinating thee, are become the Deliverers of their country. Thus are our deaths very different; but the first part of our lives are still more so. My youth was chaste, noble, ingenuous: thine had neither shame nor honesty.

CÆSAR.

Thy ghost hath lost nothing of the pride and passion that appeared when thou wast living.

ALEXANDER.

I was hurried away by my pride, I own. Thy conduct was more circumspect than mine; but thou

didst by no means imitate my candour and openness. Thou shouldest have been an honest man before thou hadst aspired to the glory of a great man. I often was weak and vain; but I was certainly a better friend to my country, and less unjust than thou.

CÆSAR.

Thou layest great stress upon justice, without having followed it thyself. For my part, I think the cleverest fellow should make himself master, and then govern wisely.

ALEXANDER.

I was but too much of thy mind. The three judges have severely reprimanded me for it, and have condemned my conquests. Yet in all my extravagancies I never thought justice to be despised; nor will it fare the better with thee, that thou hast transgressed it.

CÆSAR.

The Romans are great losers by murdering me: I had formed schemes to render them happy.

ALEXANDER.

The best scheme had been to have imitated Sylla, who having been, like thee, the tyrant of his country, restored its liberty to it; then hadst thou, like him, died in peace: but thou canst not believe me. Well, I go, and shall meet thee at the bar of Æacus, Rhadamanthus, and Minos, by whom thou must now be judged.



DIALOGUE XLII.

CÆSAR AND POMPEY.

There is nothing more fatal in a free state than the corruption of the women, and the prodigality of those who aspire to the tyranny.

P O M P E Y.

I Run myself out in expences, in order to please the Romans, and yet have much ado to compass it. Before I was five and twenty years old, I had triumphed: I conquered Sertorius, Mithridates, the pirates of Cilicia; these three triumphs attracted me a thousand enviers; I make continual largeesses, I give public shews, I win numberless clients by my benefactions: yet all this appeases not envy; stern Cato even refuses my alliance; a thousand others thwart my designs. What thinks my father-in-law of the matter? He says not a word.

CÆSAR.

I think you take a very indifferent method to govern the republic.

P O M P E Y.

How so? What do you mean? Do you know a better than giving largely to private persons in order to secure their voices, than winning the favour of the people by gladiators, by the fighting of wild beasts, by presents of corn and wine? In short, than getting a great number of zealous clients for the Sportulae I bestow? Have not Marius, Cinna,

bria, Sylla, and all the other clever fellows done the same?

CÆSAR.

All that does not hit the aim. You are quite an ignoramus; Catiline had more sense than they all.

POMPEY.

Wherein? you surprise me: Do you speak seriously?

CÆSAR.

Indeed I do: I never was more serious in my life.

POMPEY.

And what, pray, is this surprising specific for appeasing envy, for curing suspicions, for charming the Patricians and Plebeians?

CÆSAR.

Would you know it? Do as I do: I advise you to nothing but what I practise myself.

POMPEY.

What? to flatter the people with a shew of justice and liberty? To play the fiery Tribune, and the zealous Gracchus?

CÆSAR.

That is something, but not all: there is still somewhat much more effectual.

POMPEY.

What, pray? Is it any magical enchantment, invocation of a familiar, or knowing of the stars?

CÆSAR.

Pshaw! all that is nonsense; mere old women's tales.

POMPEY.

How scornful you are! You have without doubt

some commerce with the gods, like Numa, Scipio, and some others.

CÆSAR.

No, no; all these artifices are worn thread-bare.

POMPEY.

What can it be then? Hold me no longer in suspense.

CÆSAR.

Why, I'll tell you; the two fundamental points of my doctrine are these: first, to corrupt all the women, in order to get into the most intimate secrets of every family. In the second place, to borrow and spend without intermission or measure; and never to repay any thing. Every creditor has an interest in promoting your advancement, that he may not lose the money you owe him: he gives you his own vote, and runs through fire and water to procure you those of his friends. The more creditors you have, the stronger is your party. In order to make myself master of Rome, I make it my business to be a general debtor to the whole city. The more I am involved, the more power I have: we have but to spend, and riches will flow upon us.



DIALOGUE XLIII.

CICERO AND AUGUSTUS.

To oblige the ungrateful is to destroy one's self.

AUGUSTUS.

Good-morrow, great orator: I am delighted to see thee again, for I have not forgot the obligations I have to you.

CICERO.

You may remember them here below, but you did not much remember them upon earth.

AUGUSTUS.

Do not say so: even after your death, I one day found one of my grand-children reading your works: he looked confounded at my catching him so employed, fearing I would reprimand him for it; but so far from that, I encouraged him, by saying of you: ‘He was a great man, and loved his country dearly.’ So you see I did not wait till my death to speak well of you.

CICERO.

A fine reward for all I did to exalt you! When you appeared in the world young, and without authority after the death of Cæsar, I gave you my advice, my friends, my credit.

AUGUSTUS.

You did it not so much for my sake as to counter-ballance the authority of Antony, whose tyranny you dreaded.

C I C E R O .

'Tis true, I feared not a boy so much as that powerful passionate man: In this however I erred; for you were more dangerous than he. But in short, to me you owe your advancement: what did I not say to the senate on your behalf, while you were at the siege of Modena, wherein the two victorious consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, fell? Their victory served only to bring you to the head of the army. It was I who had caused the commonwealth to declare against Antony, by my orations, that were named Philippic. Instead of fighting for those who had first put arms into your hand, you meanly combined with Antony your enemy, and Lepidus, the basest of men, in order to enslave Rome. When the monstrous Triumvirate was formed, you asked men's lives, or rather men's deaths, of each other. Every one, to obtain crimes of his associate, was forced to commit some himself. Antony was obliged to sacrifice to your revenge Lucius Cæsar, his own uncle, in order to obtain my death from you, and you most ungenerously gave me up to his fury.

A U G U S T U S .

It is true: I could not deny a man I stood in need of towards making myself master of the universe: it was a violent temptation, and so may be excused.

C I C E R O .

Such black ingratitude can never be excused: had it not been for me you had never appeared in the government of the republic. O! how do I regret the praise I bestowed upon you! You were a deceitful and treacherous friend, and became a cruel tyrant.

A U G U S T U S.

What a torrent of abuses! I fancy you are going to make a Philippic against me more vehement than those against Antony.

C I C E R O.

No; I left my eloquence in the Stygian waves, but posterity will know that I made you what you were, and that it was you who put me to death, in order to gratify Antony's passion. What grieves me most is, that your baseness, while it shall render you hateful to all ages, will make me despicable to the censorious. They will say, I was the tool of a young man, who made me subservient to his ambition. One reaps nothing but sorrow and shame from obliging base-born men.



D I A L O G U E XLIV.

SERTORIUS AND MERCURY.

Fables and allusions do more with the credulous vulgar than truth and virtue.

M E R C U R Y.

I Am very sorry I am in such haste to return to Olympus, for I have a great desire to know which way thou didst end thy life.

S E R T O R I U S.

I'll tell thee in two words: the young prentice and the old woman were not able to overcome me. The traitor Perpenna put me to death; had it not been for him, I should have given my enemies some play for it.

M E R C U R Y.

Who are those thou callest the young prentice
and the old woman?

S E R T O R I U S.

Don't you know? why, Pompey and Metellus. Metellus was grown dull and heavy, irresolute, old and failed; he lost decisive opportunities by his flowness. Pompey, on the other hand, was without experience. With a parcel of Barbarians, I laughed at both these captains and their legions.

M E R C U R Y.

I don't wonder at that; for it was reported that thou wert a magician, that thou hadst a hind, which came into thy camp, and told thee all thy enemy's designs, and what thou mightst attempt against them.

S E R T O R I U S.

I told no-body about my hind so long as I had occasion for her; but now when I can no longer make use of her, I'll discover the whole mystery.

M E R C U R Y.

Well, was it any enchantment?

S E R T O R I U S.

None at all. It was a whimsical stratagem, which did me more service than my money, my troops, or the remains of the party of Marius, which I had picked up in a corner of the mountains between Spain and Lusitania. A reasonable illusion goes a great way with credulous people.

M E R C U R Y.

But was not this illusion very gross?

S E R T O R I U S.

Undoubtedly it was; but the people for whom it was prepared were still more gross.

M E R C U R Y.

How did those Barbarians give credit to all
thou toldst concerning thy hind?

S E R T O R I U S.

They thought it really true. I might have said
a great deal more and they would have believed it
all. If at any time I discovered by scouts or spies
the enemy's march, it was the hind that whispered
it in my ear. Was I defeated, the hind spoke to
me to declare that the gods were going to relieve
my party. The hind commanded the country peo-
ple to send me in all their force, lest pestilence
and famine should destroy them. Was my hind
lost a few days and then found again, I concealed
her, and by some presage or other foretold when she
would come back: after which I made her enter
again into the camp, where she failed not to bring
me news from your godships. In a word, my hind
did every thing; she alone repaired all my misfor-
tunes.

M E R C U R Y.

That animal served thee better than thou didst
us; for such impostures bring a discredit upon im-
mortals, and greatly prejudice our mysteries. In
plain terms, thou wert an impious villain.

S E R T O R I U S.

I was no more so than Numa with his nymph
Egeria; than Solon and Lycurgus with their secret
conversation with the gods; than Socrates with his
familiar spirit; in short, than Scipio with his my-
sterious way of going to consult Jove at the capitol,
who inspired all his noble enterprizes against Car-
thage. All these were impostors as well as me.

M E R C U R Y.

But they were such only in order to establish good laws, or to render their country victorious.

S E R T O R I U S.

And I to defend myself against the party of the great tyrant Sylla, who had oppressed Rome, and who had sent citizens debased into slaves to cut me off as the last support of liberty.

M E R C U R Y.

And so thou lookest upon the whole republic and Sylla's party as the same thing? The truth is, thou stoodest alone against all the Romans. But, in short, thou didst deceive those poor Barbarians under cloak of religious mysteries.

S E R T O R I U S.

I did, 'tis true; but what can a man do else when he has to deal with fools? He must needs amuse them with nonsense to attain his ends. Were he to tell them nothing but solid truths, they would give no credit to him. Trump up fables, flatter, amuse, and both children and old people will follow you.





DIALOGUE XLV.

POMPEY THE YOUNGER AND ME.
NAS THE FREEDMAN.

The character of a man, who not loving virtue for its own sake, is neither good enough to hate the treason, nor bad enough to be the traitor.

MENAS.

SHALL I perform a noble action?

POMPEY.

What is the matter? Thou art all in confusion, thou lookst like a Sibyl in her cave, sweltring, foaming, furious.

MENAS.

It is with joy. O happy opportunity! Were the case mine, all had been over before this. Shall I? In one word, yes or no?

POMPEY.

Do what? Thou explainest nothing, and requirest an answer. Say, prithee, what thou meanest; speak plain.

MENAS.

You have Antony and Octavius reclined at yonder table in your ship; they just now dream of nothing but regaling themselves.

POMPEY.

Dost thou think I have not eyes to see them?

MENAS.

But have you ears to hear me? What a fine catch!

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P O M P E Y.

How! wouldst thou have me to betray them? To break the faith plighted to my enemies? The son of the valiant Pompey to do such a villainous action? Ah, Menas, thou art badly acquainted with me!

M E N A S.

You understand me still worse. It is not you that are to do the deed: here is the hand ready for it: keep your word of honour like a great man, and let Menas alone, who has promised nothing.

P O M P E Y.

But wouldst thou have me, to whom they have trusted themselves, let thee alone? Wouldst thou have me to know and to suffer it? Ah! Menas, honest Menas, why dist thou tell it me! Why didst thou ask any questions?

M E N A S.

Oh! You shall know nothing of the matter. I'll cut the cable, and we shall put out to sea. The two tyrants of Rome are in your hands. Your father's manes will be revenged of Cæsar's heirs, Rome will be at liberty. Let no vain scruple hinder you. Menas is not Pompey: Pompey shall be true to his word, generous, loaded with glory. Menas the freedman, Menas shall perpetrate the crime, and the victorious Pompey shall reap the benefit.

P O M P E Y.

But Pompey cannot know the crime, and permit it, without partaking of the guilt. Ah wretch! thou hast ruined all by thy speaking to me. How sorry I am that thou didst not what was in thy power!

M E N A S.

If you are sorry, why do you not permit it? And

if you cannot permit it, why are you sorry? If the thing is good, you should boldly resolve it without any more ado; if it is bad, why wish it were done, and not consent that it be done? You contradict yourself: a phantom virtue frightens you. You make me very sensible of the truth of the saying, That man must have a stout heart to venture upon great crimes.

P O M P E Y.

'Tis true, Menas, I am neither good enough nor to be willing to take the benefit of a crime, nor wicked enough to dare to commit it myself. I find myself in a middle state, which is neither virtue nor vice. It is not true honour, but a false shame that restrains me. I cannot authorise a traitor, and yet should have no abhorrence of the treason, were it committed to render me master of the universe.



DIALOGUE XLVI.

CALIGULA AND NERO:

The dangers of despotic power, when a sovereign is weak-headed.

C A L I G U L A .

I AM delighted to see thee. Thou art a rarity. Some ghosts have attempted to make me jealous of thee, by assuring me, that thou has outdone me in prodigies: but I don't believe a word of it.

N E R O .

A fine comparison! why, thou wert a madman. As for me, I made sport of men, and shewed them

things they had never seen before. I put to death my mother, my wife, my governor and my preceptor; I burned my country. These are feats of a noble courage, rising above mortal weakness. The vulgar name this cruelty; but I name it a contempt of all nature, and greatness of soul.

C A L I G U L A .

Thou art a braggadocio. Didst thou stifle thy dying father as I did? Didst thou caress thy wife like me, saying to her, my pretty little head, which I can cut off when I chuse?

N E R O .

These were only merry conceits. For my part, I advance nothing but what is solid. Oh! I had almost forgot one of the finest passages of my life; and that was destroying my brother Britannicus.

C A L I G U L A .

I own that is something: Without doubt thou didst it in imitation of the virtue of Rome's great founder, who spared not the blood of his own brother for the public good; however, thou wert at best but a musician.

N E R O .

As for thee, thou hadst higher pretensions, thou would be a god, and put to death all who in the least doubted it.

C A L I G U L A .

And why not? Could men's lives have been better bestowed than in sacrifices to my godship? They were so many victims offered upon my altars.

N E R O .

I never gave into such whims: but I was the greatest musician, and the most perfect player in the empire; I was also a good poet.

C A L I G U L A .

At least thou thought so: but others thought no such thing. They made a joke of both thy voice and thy verses.

N E R O .

They did not make a joke of them for nothing. Lucan had cause to repent his attempting to excel me.

C A L I G U L A .

A noble honour truly for a Roman emperor, to mount the stage like a buffoon, to grow jealous of the poets, and to attract the public derision!

N E R O .

It was the trip I made into Greece that fired me with such a passion for the stage, and for all kinds of representations.

C A L I G U L A .

Thou shouldst have remained in Greece, there to have earned thy living as a comedian, and allowed Rome to find another emperor who should better support its majesty.

N E R O .

Had I not my gilded house, which was to have been larger than the largest cities? Ay truly, I understood magnificence.

C A L I G U L A .

Had that house been finished, the Romans must have gone to seek quarters somewhere else than in Rome. It was proportioned to the Colossus which represented thee, and not to thee, who wert no bigger than another man.

N E R O .

That was because I aimed at the grand.

C A L I G U L A .

No, thou aimedst at the gigantic and monstrous.

But all those noble designs were overthrown by Vindex.

NERO.

And thine by Chereas, as thou wast going to the theatre.

CALIGULA.

'Tis needless to lie. We both came to an untimely end, and that in the bloom of our youth.

NERO.

The truth of it is: few were disposed to put up prayers for us, or to wish us a long life. A man passes his time but badly in the continual dread of pionards.

CALIGULA.

By thy way of speaking thou wouldest make one believe, that didst thou return to the world thou wouldest change thy manner of living.

NERO.

Not at all, I should never be able to command myself. Dost thou see, my good friend, thou hast found as well as I, how dangerous a thing it is to have sovereign authority when one has but a weak head; it very quickly turns in such boundless power. Some men would have behaved themselves wisely in middle stations, who run mad when masters of the universe.

CALIGULA.

Such madness would be very pleasant, had it nothing to fear; but conspiracies, commotions, remorses, and the cares of a great empire spoil the sport. Besides, the farce is but short, or rather it is a deep tragedy that closes with an abrupt catastrophe. And then one must come here and reckon with three testy, severe, old prigs, who are not to be played withal, and who punish as miscreants those who

claimed adoration upon earth. I observe Domitian, Commodus, Caracalla, Heliogabulus, all coming loaded with chains; they are like to pass their time no better than ourselves.



DIALOGUE XLVII.

ANTONIUS PIUS AND MARCUS AURELIUS.

A man should love his family well, but his country better.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

MY father, I stand in great need of some consolation from thee. I never thought I could have felt so lively a grief, having been bred in the insensible virtue of the Stoics, and especially after descending into these happy regions, where every thing is so quiet.

ANTONIUS.

Alas, my poor son! what misfortune is it that troubles thee so much? Thy tears are very unbecoming a Stoic. What is the matter, pray?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

Ah! 'tis my son Commodus, whom I just now beheld: he hath dishonoured our name that was so grateful to the people. A prostitute has got the wretch murdered by way of prevention; he having marked her down in the list of the persons he was to put to death.

ANTONIUS.

I knew he led an infamous life. But why didn't

thou neglect his education? Thou art the occasion of his wretched fate; he hath much more reason to complain of thy neglect, which hath undone him, than thou to complain of his disorderly courses.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I had not leisure to think of a child, involved as I was always in the multiplicity of the affairs of so great an empire, or in foreign wars: and yet for all that I took some care of him. Alas! had I been a mere private man, I should myself have instructed and formed my son; I should have left him an honest man; but I left him too much power to leave him moderation or virtue.

ANTONIUS.

If thou foresawest that empire would spoil him, thou shouldst have forbore to make him emperor, both for the sake of the empire, which needed to be well governed, and for the sake of thy son, who would have made a better figure in a lower station.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I never foresaw that he would grow corrupted.

ANTONIUS.

But shouldst thou not have foreseen it? Did not a father's fondness blind thee? As for me, I made choice of a stranger in thy person to the neglect of all the interests of my family. Hadst thou done as much, thou hadst not had so many vexations; but thy son hath reflected as much shame upon thee, as thou didst me honour. Now tell me the truth, sawest thou nothing bad in the youth?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I saw some pretty considerable faults in him, but I was hopeful he would mend.

ANTONIUS.

That is to say, thou wert willing to make a tri-

al, at the empire's cost. Hadst thou sincerely loved thy country beyond thy family thou wouldest not have chose to risk the public weal, in order to maintain the private grandeur of thy house.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

To speak the truth, I never had any other intention, than to prefer the empire to my son. But the affection I had for him prevented me from observing him so narrowly. In my doubts, I inclined to the favourable side, and my hopes got the better of my fears.

ANTONIUS.

O what misfortune it is that the best of men should be so imperfect; and that having so much difficulty to do good, they should so frequently commit irreparable evil undesignedly!

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I saw him a genteel fellow, dextrous at all the bodily exercises, and environed with wise counsellors, who had enjoyed my confidence, and were capable to moderate his youth. 'Tis true his natural disposition was fickle, violent, voluptuous.

ANTONIUS.

Knewest thou no man in Rome more worthy of the empire of the world?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I own, there were many; but I thought I might prefer my son, provided he was duly qualified.

ANTONIUS.

What signified then that language of so heroic virtue, when thou wroteſt to Faſtina; that if Avdius Caſſius was more worthy of the empire than thou and thy family, it was fit he ſhould prevail, and that thy family ſhould perish with thee. Why didſt thou not follow thoſe generous maxims, when thou

camest to chuse a successor? Did not thy duty to thy country require thee to prefer the most worthy?

M A R C U S A U R E L I U S .

I confess I was in the wrong: but the wife whom thou hadst given me with the empire, and whose disorderly life I bore with out of gratitude to thee, suffered me not to keep up to the purity of those maxims. By giving me thy daughter with the empire, thou didst commit the first fault, of which mine was but the consequence. Thou madest me two presents, one whereof spoiled the other, and stopped me from making a right use of it. I was unwilling to excuse myself by blaming thee; but thou drivest me to it. Didst not thou do the same for thy daughter, that thou reproachest me with doing for my son?

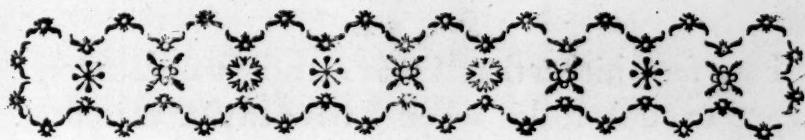
A N T O N I U S .

While I reproach thee with thy fault, I am far from disowning mine: But I had given thee a wife who had no authority: she had nothing but the name of empress. Thou couldst, and thou shouldst have divorced her, according to the laws, when thou foundst her bad behaviour. In a word, thou oughtst to have been beyond a woman's importunities. Besides, she was dead, and thou wast free, when thou leftest the empire to thy son. Thou hast acknowledged the fickle and fiery temper of that youth. He thought of nothing but giving public shews, handling the bow, shooting wild beasts, and being as wild as they. He turned gladiator, distracted his imagination, going cloathed with nothing but a lion's skin, as if he had been Hercules; he plunged into the most abominable vices, and pursued all his fusions with a savage cruelty. O my son, for-

bear thy excuses! So senseless and cruel a fellow could never have deceived a person of thy penetration, had not thy fatherly fondness weakened thy prudence and virtue.

END OF THE DIALOGUES OF THE ANTIENTS.





DIALOGUES OF THE MODERNS.

DIALOGUE I.

LEGER AND EBROIN.

A solitary and private life hath no charms for an ambitious mind.

EBROIN.

THE greatest comfort to me, in my misfortunes, is, to find you in this solitude.

LEGER.

And I am sorry to find you in it; for 'tis of no benefit for a man to be in it against his will.

EBROIN.

But why should you despair of my conversion? your advice and example may possibly mend me. And seeing that you are so charitable, can you not bestow some of your leisure hours upon me?

LEGER.

I am sent hither that I may meddle with nothing ;
I have enough to do, when I have myself to reform.

EBROIN.

How ! have you upon entering into solitude renounced all charity ?

LEGER.

By no means. I shall pray for you.

EBROIN.

O ! I now see it plainly. You give me up as one unworthy of your instructions : but you wrong me. I own I came hither against my will ; but now, that I am come, I am well enough satisfied to be here. This desert is the most beautiful I ever saw. Do you not admire those rivulets cascading from the mountains ; those craggy rocks, partly covered with moss : those trees which appear as ancient as the earth they stand on ? Nature has here a certain savage frightfulness, which is at the same time melancholy and pleasing.

LEGER.

All that is quite insipid to one who hath a taste for ambition, and who hath not lost his passion for vain things. The soul must be in an innocent and peaceful state, before it can be affected with these rural beauties.

EBROIN.

But I was weary of the world, and its cares, when I was sent hither.

LEGER.

It appears you were very weary of it, seeing you left it by force.

EBROIN.

I should not have had the courage to leave it voluntarily, and yet I was out of conceit with it.

LEGER.

As out of conceit as you were: you would gladly return to it, and want only to find the means of doing it. I know you well enough; so 'tis in vain to dissemble; confess your pain, and be honest at least.

EBROIN.

But, holy Prelate, were you and I to return to the helm of affairs, we would do an infinite deal of good. We should stand by one another in the defence of virtue, and bear down, in concert, whatever should oppose us.

LEGER.

You may trust yourself, as far as you please, upon your past experience; seek pretexts to gratify your passions. As for me, who have been here longer than you, I have had time to learn diffidence in myself, and in the world. That ungrateful world hath once deceived me; but never shall deceive me a second time. I endeavoured to do it good, and in return it has done me a great deal of mischief. I meant to assist a well-designing queen; they turned her authority into contempt, and obliged herself to retire. By endeavouring to imprison me, they have restored me to my liberty. Too happy am I to have nothing more to do, but to die peaceably in this desart.

EBROIN.

But you don't consider, that, if we will again unite our interests, we have it in our power to become absolute masters.

LEGER.

Of what? of the seas and the winds? no, I have been shipwrecked once, and I'll embark no more. Do you go back, and push your fortune, torment yourself, run all hazards, be cut off in the

flower of your age ! in order to disturb the world, and to get a name, be unhappy in this life, and damned in the next: you well deserve it, since you cannot be at rest.

E B R O I N.

But is it true that ambition is quite extinguished in your heart ?

L E G E R.

Would you believe me if I told you ?

E B R O I N.

I really do not know whether I should, for—

L E G E R.

Then I will not tell you. One may as well speak to the deaf. Neither the toils of prosperity, nor the succeeding rigours of adverse fortune, have been able to mend you. Go, return to court, reassume the helm, and make both the world and yourself unhappy.



DIALOGUE II.

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE OF WALES, AND RICHARD HIS SON.

The character of a weak prince.

E D W A R D.

A LAS ! my dear son, I am sorry to see thee so soon again. I was in hopes that your reign would be long and happy. What has made thy death so sudden ? Have you been guilty of the

same fault that I was, and ruined your health by an excess of fatigue in the war against France?

RICHARD.

No, father : my health never failed ; other misfortunes brought me to my grave.

EDWARD.

How then, has some traitor imbrued his hands in your blood ? if so, England, which has not yet forgot me, will revenge your death.

RICHARD.

Alas ! my father, all England has joined together to dishonour, degrade, and destroy me.

EDWARD.

Heavens ! who could have believed it ? whom shall one henceforth trust ? but did you do nothing to deserve their hatred ? confess the truth to your father.

RICHARD.

To my father ! they say you are not he ; and that I am son to a canon of Bourdeaux.

EDWARD.

That is what no man can answer for ; but I cannot believe it. It is not, sure, your mother's conduct that inspires the people with such a notion ; but it must be thine, that makes them say so.

RICHARD.

They said I prayed like a canon ; that I could neither preserve authority over the people, exercise justice, nor wage war.

EDWARD.

O my child ! and was all that true ? It had been better to have led a monk's life at Westminster, than filled the throne with so much contempt.

RICHARD.

My intentions were good ; I set good example,

and sometimes shewed spirit enough. For instance, I caused my uncle, the duke of Gloucester, to be seized and executed, when he was rallying all the malecontents with a design to dethrone me, had I not prevented him.

EDWARD.

That was a bold stroke, and probably a necessary one; for I knew my brother to be a dissembling, artful, enterprizing man, an enemy to lawful authority, and fit to rally a dangerous party. But, my son, hadst thou given him no handle against thee? besides, was that step prudent enough? and didst thou support it stoutly?

RICHARD.

The duke of Gloucester accused me of being too zealous for the French, our nation's enemies. My marriage with the daughter of Charles VI. of France afforded the duke the means of alienating the hearts of the English from me.

EDWARD.

And did you make yourself suspected by your subjects, for an alliance with their irreconcilable enemies? And what didst thou get by that marriage? Hast thou joined Poictou and Touraine to Guienne, and so united all our French dominions as far as Normandy?

RICHARD.

No, but I thought it was necessary to have a foreign ally, able to take my part against the factious English.

EDWARD.

Unhappy wretch! dishonour of the royal family! thou goest to supplicate aid from thine enemies, whose great interest it ever will be to lessen thy power. Thou wouldest establish thyself on the throne

by espousing interests contrary to the greatness of thy own nation. Not contented with being beloved by thy subjects, thou wantedst to be feared by them, by making alliances with their enemies to oppress them. Alas! where are now those happy days, when I put the king of France to flight in the plains of Cressy, purpled with the blood of thirty thousand Frenchmen, and took another king of that nation at the gates of Poictiers! O how times are changed! Well might they take you for a canon's son. But who was it dethroned thee?

RICHARD.

The Earl of Derby.

EDWARD.

By what means? did he raise an army? did he overthrow you in battle?

RICHARD.

No, a quarrel with the general had forced him to fly into France. The archbishop of Canterbury went over secretly, and invited him to enter into a conspiracy. He passed through Bretany, arrived at London when I was not there, and found the people ready to revolt. The greatest part of the rebels took arms: their number amounted to sixty thousand. Every aid forsook me; the earl came and found me in a castle, where I had shut myself up. He had the boldness to enter almost alone; so that I might then have killed him.

EDWARD.

Wretch that thou art! Why didst thou not do it.

RICHARD.

Because the people, that were every where up in arms, would have butchered me.

E D W A R D.

And had it not been much better to have died like a valiant man?

R I C H A R D.

Besides this, an omen deterred me.

E D W A R D.

What was it?

R I C H A R D.

My bitch, which before would never fawn upon any but myself, forsook me instantly to fawn upon the earl. I was sensible of the meaning of this, and I told the earl my thoughts of the matter.

E D W A R D.

Prodigious folly! so a dog disposed of thy authority, thy honour, thy life, and decided the fate of all England. What didst thou then?

R I C H A R D.

I begged the earl to put me in safety from the fury of the incensed people.

E D W A R D.

Alas! nothing more was wanting to compleat thy infamy, but to beg thy life of the usurper. However, did he give it thee?

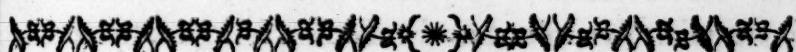
R I C H A R D.

Yes, at first. He shut me up in the Tower, where I might have lived peaceably enough. But my friends did me more mischief than my enemies; for they attempted to rally, in order to rescue me from my captivity, and to pull down the usurper. Then, indeed, he was forced to dispatch me; but he had no inclination to be guilty of my death.

E D W A R D.

A complete misfortune indeed! my son was weak and unequal: his want of virtue renders him contemptible: he enters into an alliance with his e-

nemies, and provokes his subjects to revolt: he foresees not the gathering storm: his courage fails the moment he is attacked: he loses opportunities of destroying the usurper: he cowardly begs his life, and does not obtain it. O heavens! how do you sport with the glory of princes, and with the prosperity of states! Is this the grandson of Edward, who overcame Philip, and ravaged his kingdom? Is this the son of him who took king John, and made France and Spain tremble?



DIALOGUE III.

CHARLES VII. AND JOHN DUKE
OF BURGUNDY.

*Cruelty and treachery, far from lessening dangers,
rather increase them.*

BURGUNDY.

NOW that our course is finished, and we have no more concern amongst the living, pri-thee let us reason a little calmly. Why didst thou cause me to be assasinated? A dauphin to be guilty of such treachery to his own blood, to his cousin, who—

CHARLES.

Who wanted to imbroil every thing, and was like to have destroyed France. You wanted to govern me, as you had done the two dauphins, my brothers, before me.

BURGUNDY.

But it was infamous to have me assasinated!

CHARLES.

To assassinate was the safest way.

BURGUNDY.

What! In a place whither you had drawn me by the most solemn promises? I entered the barrier (methinks I am there still) with Noailles, brother to the Captal de Buch. The perfidious Taneguy du Chatel inhumanly murders us both.

CHARLES.

You may declaim as much as you please, cousin; but I stand to my first maxim: when one has to do with so violent and restless a fellow as you were, assassinating is the safest way.

BURGUNDY.

The safest! you don't consider, sure, what you say.

CHARLES.

I do consider, sure: it is the safest way, I tell you.

BURGUNDY.

Was it the safest way, to incur all the dangers into which you plunged yourself, by putting me to death? you did yourself more mischief, by causing me to be assassinated, than I could possibly have done you.

CHARLES.

There is a great deal to be said for me. If you had not died, I must have perished, and France with me.

BURGUNDY.

Was it my interest to ruin France? I wanted to govern it, and not to destroy or oppress it. You had better suffered somewhat from my jealousy and ambition. After all, I was of your blood. Having a pretty near prospect of succeeding to the

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crown, it was not a little my interest to maintain its grandeur. I could never have found in my heart to combine against France, with the English, her enemies: but your treachery, and my murder, laid my son, though a good-natured man, under a kind of necessity to revenge my death, and join the English. Such was the fruit of your perfidy! It was to form a league of the house of Burgundy with the queen, your mother, and with the English, to overturn the French monarchy. Cruelty and treachery, far from lessening dangers, increase them beyond measure, as you may judge from your own experience. My death, by delivering you from one enemy, raised you others far more terrible, and put France in a situation more deplorable than ever. All the provinces were in a flame: the whole country was a scene of plunder, and nothing less than miracles could have brought you out of the abyfs whereto that execrable murder had plunged you. Then, come again, and tell me, with a positive air, that to assassinate is the safest way.

C H A R L E S.

I must confess that your arguments confound me, and I see you are a very subtle politician: but I shall have my revenge by matters of fact. Why do you now think it not good to assassinate? Did not you assassinate my uncle, the duke of Orleans? You was not so great a philosopher then, I suppose, but thought as I do.

B U R G U N D Y.

Indeed I did; but however, by the success of that you may see it is not safe. Had I let the duke of Orleans live, you would never have meditated my death; and so I should have found it my advantage. He, who first embarks in such practices,

should foresee that they will land upon himself at the last. From the hour he makes an attempt upon the lives of others, his own hath not a quarter's safety.

CHARLES.

Well, cousin, I see we have both been to blame: I was not indeed assassinated in my turn, like you, but I involved myself in strange perplexities by your death.



DIALOGUE IV.

LEWIS XI. AND THE CARDINAL BESSARION.

A scholar is not fit to be at the helm of affairs, and yet much fitter than a great wit, who is an enemy to justice and honesty.

CARDINAL, a good morning to you! I shall receive you more civilly to-day, than when you came in the pope's name to see me. We shall no longer fall out about ceremonials. All ghosts are here promiscuous, and incog. ranks are quite confounded here.

BESSARION.

I confess I have not yet forgot your injurious treatment, when you took me by the beard, at the very beginning of my speech.

LEWIS.

That Grecian beard surprized me; besides, I wanted to cut the speech short, which otherwise had been long and superfluous.

BESSARTON.

Why so? it was a very fine one, I can assure you, and composed upon the model of Isocrates, Lysias, Hyperides, and Pericles.

LEWIS.

I'm acquainted with none of those gentlemen: but you had been to see the duke of Burgundy, my vassal, before you came to me. Now, it had been much better to have read fewer old fusty authors, and to have known better the rules of the present age. You behaved yourself like a pedant, who hath no knowledge of the world.

BESSARTON.

Yet I had thoroughly studied the laws of Draco, Lycurgus and Solon, the laws and republic of Plato, all we have extant of the ancient orators, who have governed any people; and, in short, the best commentators and schoolmen, who have treated of the polity of a commonwealth.

LEWIS.

And I never read any of all those; but I know that a cardinal sent by the pope, to restore the duke of Burgundy to my favour, ought not to have gone to visit him before he waited upon me.

BESSARTON.

I thought I might follow the Hysteron Proteron of the Greeks: I knew also from philosophy, that what is first in intention, is last in execution.

LEWIS.

Let us leave your philosophy, and come to the point.

BESSARTON.

In you I see all the barbarity of the Latins, among whom Greece, desolate since the taking of

Constantinople, vainly attempts to revive wit and learning, and root out ignorance.

LEWIS.

Wisdom consists in good sense, and not in Greek. Reason is to be met with in all languages: you should have observed order, and put the lord before the vassal. The Greeks you so extol were but blockheads, if they did not know what is known by the most illiterate of men. But I cannot forbear laughing, when I reflect upon your manner of negotiating. Whenever I did not agree to any of your maxims, all you gave me for argument was some passage or other out of Sophocles, Lycophron or Pindar. I should never have remembred their names had they not been eternally quoted by you. If the places on the Somme were in question, you cited me a verse of Menander or Callimachus. Was I for continuing my alliance with the Swiss and the duke of Lorrain, against the duke of Burgundy, you would prove to me, from Gorgias and Plato, that it was not my true interest. When the question was, whether the king of England would be for or against me? you qucted me the example of Epaminondas. In short, you quite eased me of the grief I was under for having never studied. I often said within myself, Happy he who knows nothing of what others have said, and who knows a little what he ought to say himself.

BESSARION.

The badnes of your taste surprizes me. I thought you had studied a good deal. I was told, the king, your father, had given you a good preceptor; and that afterwards, when in Flanders at the duke of Burgundy's, your daily delight was in disputing with philosophers.

L E W I S .

I was very young when I left the king my father, and my preceptor. I went to the court of Burgundy, where trouble and disquiet reduced me now and then to submit to the hearing of learned men: but I had soon enough of them: they were pedantic and crazy like yourself: they did not understand business; nor had they any notion of the different characters of men: they knew neither how to dissemble, to hold their peace, to insinuate themselves, to humour the passions, to find resources in difficulties, nor to fathom the designs of others: they were vain indiscreet wranglers, ever dwelling upon words and useless trifles, full of quibbles, which convince no-body, incapable of learning how to live in the world, or of putting a constraint upon themselves. Such animals are not to be born with.

B E S S A R I O N .

I own that scholars are not over fit for action because they love the repose of the muses: nor can they easily constrain themselves, or dissemble, they being above the gross passions of man, and the flattery which tyrants require.

L E W I S .

Away, long-beard, thou pedant, bristling with Greek; thou losest the respect that is due to me.

B E S S A R I O N .

I owe you none. The sage, according to the Stoics, is more a king than ever you were, both in dignity and power. You never, like the wise man, had the command of your passions: besides, you now have but a shadow of royalty. Between ghost and ghost, I am as good as you.

LEWIS.

Mark the insolence of the old pedant!

BESSARION.

I would yet rather be a pedant than a knave, and the tyrant of mankind : I never put my brother to death, nor detained my son in prison : I used neither poison nor assassination to get rid of my enemies : I had no dismal old age, like that of the tyrants whom Greece so much detested : but you are to be excused; for, with a good deal of wit and vacuity, you gave many indications of a somewhat disordered head. It was not for nothing that you were the son of a man who had starved himself to death, and grandson to another who had been locked up so many years. Your son, himself, has not a very solid head-piece; and it will be no small happiness to France, if the crown shall, after him, devolve to a more sensible branch.

LEWIS.

I must own that my head-piece was none of the best. I had weak and gloomy visions, with fits of fury, but I had penetration, courage, a ready wit, talents for winning men's hearts, and advancing my own authority. I knew how to overlook an useless pedant, and to discover useful qualities in the meanest of my subjects: nay, even when languishing under my last illness, I still retained presence of mind to endeavour a peace with Maximilian. He looked every moment for my death, and endeavoured to shift off the conclusion; but, by my private emissaries, I raised the Ghentese against him, and obliged him, much against his will, to make a treaty of peace with me, wherein he gave me for my son, Margaret his daughter, with a dowry of three provinces. This was my master-piece in politics in

those latter days, when I was thought out of my senfes. Away, old pedant, go seek your Greeks, who never had so much policy in them; go seek your mere scholars, who can do nothing but read, and talk of their books; who know neither how to deal, nor how to live with men.

BESSARION.

I still prefer a man of learning, who is not fit for business, and who knows nothing but what he hath read, to a restless, subtle, enterprizing spirit, that is an enemy to justice and humanity, and confounds all mankind.



DIALOGUE V.

LEWIS XI. AND CARDINAL DE LA BALUE.

A wicked prince teaches his subjects to be treacherous and unfaithful.

LEWIS.

HOW dare you, you wretch, appear before me, after having been such a traitor?

BALUE.

Where would you have me go and hide myself? Am I not sufficiently hid in the croud of ghosts? We are all upon a level here below.

LEWIS.

This language becomes you well, who were a miller's son.

BALUE.

To you a mean extraction was meritorius; your

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companion Tristan the provost, your physician Cocquier, your barber Oliver were your favourites and first ministers. Janfredy had, before me, obtained the purple by your interest. Now, my birth was even almost as good as any those gentlemen could pretend to.

L E W I S .

None of them was guilty of such treachery as thou wert.

B A L U E .

I cannot tell that; for if they had not been worthless fellows, you had neither used them so well, nor employed them.

L E W I S .

And wherefore do you alledge that I did not make choice of them for their merit?

B A L U E .

Because you always hasted and suspected merit: because virtue frightened you, and you knew not how to make use of it: because you would be served by none but mean souls, and such as were ready to go into your intrigues, into your cheats, into your cruelties. An honest man, who dreaded to cheat, or to do evil, would have been good for nothing to you, who wanted only cheating and mischief, in order to gratify your boundless ambition. Since we must speak freely in the land of truth, I confess I was a worthless fellow; but that was the reason why you preferred me to other men. Did I not serve you very dexterously in mocking the grandees and the people? Did you ever light on a more supple knave than myself, or fitter for all characters?

L E W I S .

No, it is true: but while you deceived others, in obedience to me, you should not have deceived my-

self. You held a correspondence with the pope, in order to make me abolish the pragmatic sanction, contrary to the true interests of France.

B A L U E .

Pshaw! you never cared a pin for either France, or its true interest, but minded your own only. You wanted to take advantage of the pope; so I did but serve you in your own fauce.

L E W I S .

But it was you who filled my head with these visionary projects, contrary to the interest of my crown, to which my own greatness was inseparably joined.

B A L U E .

Not at all; I wanted you to sell the court of Rome that dirty Pancart as dear as possible. But I'll go farther with you: even suppose I had cheated you, what had you to say to me?

L E W I S .

How, to say to you? you are a pleasant fellow truly! were we amongst the living, I would clap you up in your cage again.

B A L U E .

Oh, I was long enough there already. If you anger me, I shall not say a word more. Do you know that I don't greatly dread the fury of a royal ghost? How now, you fancy yourself still at Plessis-les-Tours, with your ruffians about you.

L E W I S .

No, I don't; and 'tis well for you I am not: but, in short, I am resolved to hear you for the oddity of the thing. Come then, prove to me, by solid arguments that you ought to betray your master.

B A L U E .

That paradox surprizes you; but I shall demonstrate it literally.

LEWIS.

Let us see what he will say.

BALUÉ.

Is it not true that a poor miller's son, who had never any other education than the court of a great king, ought to follow the maxims that were with one consent allowed the wisest and best?

LEWIS.

There is some show of reason in what you say.

BALUÉ.

But answer, yes or no, without growing angry.

LEWIS.

I dare neither deny a thing that seems so well founded, nor own it, lest the conclusions drawn from it should confound me.

BALUÉ.

I find I must take your silence for consent, and so I proceed. The fundamental maxim of all your counsels, and which you diffused through your whole court, was to do every thing for your own end : you had no regard for the princes of your blood, nor for the queen, whom you kept in captivity, and at a distance ; nor for the dauphin, who was educated in ignorance and confinement ; nor, in short, for the kingdom itself, which you ruined by your rigorous and cruel policy, and the interests whereof you ever postponed to your jealousy for tyrannical power. You had no regard even to the most trusty favourites and ministers, whom you employed in deceiving others. You never loved any of them, nor ever trusted them, but in time of need. You endeavoured to deceive them in their turn, as well as the rest of the world. You were ready to sacrifice them upon the smallest suspicion, or for the least advantage. One had never a sure moment with

you. You sported with mens lives; you loved no body, and yet you would have had every body to love you; you wanted to impose on every body; who did you think would give himself up to you with sincerity, and real friendship, and without interest? where should we have learned such disinterested fidelity? did you deserve it? did you expect it? was it possible to practise it with you, and in your court? was it possible to be eight days under your roof with an honest and sincere heart? was not a man forced to be a rogue the moment he approached you? was not a man obliged to be a villain to attain your favour, as there was no attaining it but by villainy? whoever wanted to preserve any honour or conscience, was obliged carefully to avoid your acquaintance; and would have gone to the farthest corner of the world rather than lived in your service. When once a man is a rogue, he is a rogue to all the world. Would you have had a soul, which you have corrupted and taught to be treacherous to all mankind, never to have ought but pure and spotless virtue, but disinterested and heroic fidelity to you alone? were you fool enough to think it? did you not lay your account, that all men would do to you, as you did to them? Nay, though one had been good and sincere to all other men, one would have been forced to become false and wicked to you, by betraying you. I therefore did but follow your lessons and tread in your footsteps: I did but return to you what you gave every day to others: I did but what you expected of me: I did but take for the principle of my conduct the principle you observed, as the only one that ought to actuate all men. You would have despised a man who had any other interest at heart than his own. I had no mind to deserve

your contempt; and chose rather to deceive you, than to be accounted a fool by you.

L E W I S .

I own your reasoning confounds me; but wherefore did you enter into a league with my brother, the duke of Guienne, and with the duke of Burgundy, my cruellest enemy?

B A L U E .

It was because they were your most dangerous enemies that I combined with them that I might be protected, in case you should attempt my death. I knew you would lay your account with my treachery: and that you were capable of believing it without any foundation. I chose rather to betray you, in order to escape your hands, than perish in your hands upon suspicion, without having betrayed you. In short, I followed your maxims, made myself valued by both parties, and got a reward for my services in a time of need, which you would never have willingly granted me in time of peace. This it is, that an ungrateful, distrustful deceitful prince, who loves nothing but himself, must expect from his ministers.

L E W I S .

And this it is, that a traitor, who sells his king, must expect: the dignity of cardinal protects him from death, but he is kept eleven years in prison, and stript of all his ill-got wealth.

B A L U E .

My only fault was, in not deceiving you with due precaution, and in suffering my letters to be intercepted. Had I the same opportunity again, I would deceive you again, as you deserve, but so cunningly, that you should never discover me.

DIALOGUE VI.

LEWIS XI. AND PHILIP DE
COMMINES.

The weakness and crimes of kings can never be concealed.

LEWIS.

THEY say that you have written the history
of my life.

COMMINES.

It is true, Sir, and I have spoken of you as a loyal servant should do.

LEWIS.

But they tell me that you have related a great many things which I could willingly have dispensed with.

COMMINES.

Probably I have; but take it in general I have drawn a very favourable picture of you. Would you have had me an eternal flatterer, instead of an historian?

LEWIS.

You ought to have spoken of me like a subject loaded with his master's favours.

COMMINES.

That is the way to be believed by no body. Gratitude is not the thing looked for in an history: on the contrary, 'tis that which renders it suspected.

LEWIS.

Why must some people have such an itch of writ-

ing? Can't they let the dead lie, without blasting their memories?

C O M M I N E S.

Yours was strangely blasted before I wrote: I endeavoured to soften the impressions already made: I mentioned all your good qualities, and endeavoured to clear you of all odious imputations. What more could I do?

L E W I S .

Either have been silent, or defended me in every thing. They say you have represented all my grimaces and distortions, when I talked alone to myself, all my intrigues with mean people. They say you have exposed my familiarities with my provost, physician, barber, and taylor. They say you have not forgot my petty devotions, especially towards the latter end of my days; my eagerness to amass reliques, to have myself anointed from head to foot with the oil of the holy phial, and to perform pilgrimages, whereby I always pretended to be cured. You have made mention of my little lady of lead, which I used to kiss, whenever I meant to do a wicked deed; in fine, of the cross of St. Lo, by which I never dared to swear without resolving to keep my oath; because I should have expected to die within the year, had I broke it. Now all this is very ridiculous stuff.

C O M M I N E S .

But is not all this true?

L E W I S .

What if it be; you need not have mentioned it.

C O M M I N E S .

You might have left it undone then.

L E W I S .

But as it was done, you should not have told it.

C O M M I N E S .

When once done, I could not conceal it from posterity.

L E W I S .

What! may not some certain things be concealed?

C O M M I N E S .

And do you think a king can be concealed after his death, as you concealed certain intrigues in your life-time? I should have done no good by my silence; and should have hurt my own character. Be satisfied that I could have said much worse, and been believed; and I did not chuse it.

L E W I S .

And ought not history to reverence kings?

C O M M I N E S .

Ought not kings to reverence history and posterity, whose censure they never can escape? Those who would not be ill spoke of, have only one way of preventing it; and that is, to behave themselves well.



DIALOGUE VII.

LEWIS XI. AND CHARLES
DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Wicked men, who have no notion of virtue, by deceiving, and distrusting others, come to be deceived themselves.

L E W I S .

I Am sorry, cousin, for the misfortunes which happened to you.

B U R G U N D Y .

You were the occasion of them, by deceiving me.

L E W I S .

It was your pride and passion that deceived you. Have you forgot that I gave you notice of a man's offering me to slay you?

B U R G U N D Y .

I could not believe it : for I fancied that had the thing been true, you would not have had honesty enough to give me notice of it, and that you had invented it purposely to put me in fear, by making me suspect all those I employed. Such a trick was quite in character with you ; and I could not be much blamed for believing you guilty of it. Who would not have been deceived as well as I, at a time when you shewed yourself good and sincere ?

L E W I S .

I confess that my sincerity was not often to be trusted : but still it had been better to have trust-

ed me, than the traitor Campobache, who sold thee for six thousand crowns.

B U R G U N D Y.

Since policy is out of season in Pluto's dominions, I will speak freely to you. We both went upon strange maxims; neither of us had any notion of virtue. In such a situation, by distrusting every body, one frequently persecutes good men, and then falls a prey, through a kind of necessity to the first comer; and this first comer is commonly a villain, who insinuates himself by flattery. But, in the main, my temper was better than yours. I was hasty, and somewhat sour in my humour; but I was neither deceitful nor cruel like you. Do you remember, that, at the conference of Conflans, you acknowledged to me, that I was quite a gentleman, and that I had honourably kept you the promise I had given the archbishop of Narbonne?

L E W I S.

Pshaw! those were only flattering speeches I then made to amuse you, and to detach you from the other chiefs of the league. I was sensible, that whilst I praised you, I might bubble you.



DIALOGUE VIII.

LEWIS XI. AND LEWIS XII.

Generosity and honesty are surer maxims of policy than barbarity and cunning.

LEWIS XI.

IF I am not mistaken, there is one of my successors. Though shades lose all their majesty here below, I imagine this may have been some king of France; for I perceive the other shades pay it respect, and speak French to it. Will you be so kind as to tell me who you are?

LEWIS XII.

I am the duke of Orleans, afterwards king, under the name of Lewis XII.

LEWIS XI.

How didst thou govern my kingdom?

LEWIS XII.

By ways quite different from yours: thou madest thyself feared; I made myself beloved. Thou didst begin to burden the people; I eased them of their burdens, and preferred their repose to the glory of conquering my enemies.

LEWIS XI.

You were ignorant, I see, of the art of reigning. It was I who acquired my successors a boundless power; it was I who dissolved the leagues of princes and lords; it was I who levied immense sums. I discovered the secrets of others, and knew how to conceal my own. Subtlety, haughtiness, and se-

verity, are the true maxims of government. I am much afraid that thou hast spoiled all, and that thy softness hath ruined my whole work.

LEWIS XII.

The success of my maxims have shewn that thine were false and pernicious. I made myself beloved. I lived in peace without forfeiting my honour, shedding blood, or ruining my people. Thy memory is odious ; mine is honoured. During my life, my subjects were faithful to me ; after my death they bewail me, and fear they will never get so good a king again. When one is so great a gainer by generosity and honesty, he must needs condemn cruelty and cunning.

LEWIS XI.

A fine way of reasoning this, which thou hast doubtless learned in that long confinement, wherein I am told thou didst languish before thy ascending the throne.

LEWIS XII.

That confinement was not so shameful as thine at Peronne. Behold the effect of cunning and deceit ! a man gets himself nabbed by his enemies : honesty would never expose him to so great dangers.

LEWIS XI.

But my cunning delivered me out of the duke of Burgundy's clutches.

LEWIS XII.

Yes, by the power of money, wherewith thou didst bribe his servants ; and by shamefully attending him to the ruin of thy allies, the people of Liege, which thou wert obliged to witness.

LEWIS XI.

Have you extended the limits of the kingdom as

I did? I annexed to the crown the dutchy of Burgundy, the county of Provence, and even Guienne too.

LEWIS XII.

I understand thee; thou knewest how to get rid of a brother, in order to inherit his portion. Thou tookest advantage of the misfortune of the duke of Burgundy, who was running headlong to his destruction. Thou didst bribe the counsellor of the county of Provence, in order to catch his succession. For my part, I am content with having got Bretany by a lawful match with the heiress of that house, whom I loved, and whom I married after thy son's death. Besides, I was less intent upon acquiring new subjects, than upon making loyal and happy those I had already. I experienced too, by the wars of Naples and Milan, how prejudicial distant conquests are to a state.

LEWIS XI.

I see plainly thou hast had neither ambition nor genius.

LEWIS XII.

I had none of that false and deceitful genius, which rendered thee so odious, or of that ambition, which places honour in disregarding sincerity and justice.

LEWIS XI.

Thou talkest too much.

LEWIS XII.

'Tis thou that has often talked too much. Hast thou forgot the merchant of Bourdeaux, who settled in England, and king Edward, whom thou didst invite to come to Paris? Farewel.



DIALOGUE IX.

THE CONSTABLE OF BOURBON AND BAYARD.

It is never lawful to take up arms against our country.

CONSTABLE.

IS not that Bayard whom I see beneath that oak, stretched upon the grass, and dismally wounded? Yes, it is himself. Alas! I pity him. This day both Vandenesse and he have fallen by our arms, who, for their courage, were ornaments of the French. My heart is still touched for my country. But I'll step forward and speak to him. Ah, poor Bayard, 'tis with grief I behold thee in this condition.

BAYARD.

'Tis with grief I behold you too.

CONSTABLE.

I know you are sorry, that the chance of war has made you fall into my hands; but I will by no means treat you like a prisoner. I will keep you as a good friend, and take as much care of your wounds, as if you were my own brother. Why then do you grieve to see me?

BAYARD.

Ah, do you think I am not sorry to lie under an obligation to France's greatest enemy? 'Tis neither my captivity, nor my wound, that gives me pain. I

shall die in a few moments; and death will instantly set me free.

C O N S T A B L E.

No, my dear Bayard, I hope my endeavours will prove successful towards your recovery.

B A Y A R D.

I desire it not; and am content to die.

C O N S T A B L E.

What ails thee then? Art thou inconsolable for being vanquished, and made prisoner in Bonivet's retreat? It is not thy fault, but his. The fortune of arms is variable. Your glory is sufficiently established by thy great actions. The imperialists will never forget the vigorous defence of Meziers against them.

B A Y A R D.

For my part, I can never forget that you are that high constable, that prince of the noblest blood in the world, who is labouring with his own hands to destroy his country, and the kingdom of his ancestors.

C O N S T A B L E.

What, Bayard, do you condemn me while I praise you? insult me, whilst I pity?

B A Y A R D.

I return your pity, and think you need it most. I leave the world with a spotless character. I have sacrificed my life to my duty; I die for my king and my country, esteemed by the enemies of France, and regretted by all true Frenchmen. My condition challenges envy rather than pity.

C O N S T A B L E.

But I am victorious over an enemy who hath affronted me. I revenged myself of him; I drove him out of the Milanese; and made all France feel her

misfortune in having lost me, by her so provoking me : calleſt thou this a ſituation to be pitied?

B A Y A R D .

Yes, a man is always to be pitied when he acts contrary to his duty ; 'tis better to fall fighting for one's country, than to conquer and triumph over her. Ah ! how horrid is the glory of him who destroys his native country !

C O N S T A B L E .

But after all the services I had done my country it proved ungrateful. The duchess of Orleans caused me to be unworthily treated out of a love-pique. The king, through weakness for her, did me an hainous piece of injustice. I was not only deprived of my estate, but of my most faithful servants, Matignon and Argouges, who were taken from me ; and I was forced to fly for my life almost alone : now what wouldſt thou have had me done ?

B A Y A R D .

Why, to have suffered any thing rather than have betrayed France, and the greatness of your own house. If the persecution was too violent, you might have retired : but you had better been poor, unknown, useless, than have taken up arms against us. Your glory had been complete in poverty, or in the most miserable exile.

C O N S T A B L E .

But do you not see that revenge joined ambition, in order to drive me to this extremity ? I wanted to make the king repent his ill usage of me.

B A Y A R D .

That you should have done by a patience proof to all attacks, which is no less the virtue of a hero than courage.

C O N S T A B L E.

But did the king, who was so unjust, and so blinded by his mother, deserve that I should have such a regard for him?

B A Y A R D.

If the king did not deserve it, France did. Nay, the dignity of the crown, to which you were one of the nearest heirs, deserved it. You owed to yourself to spare France, whose king you might possibly one day have become.

C O N S T A B L E.

Well, I was to blame, I confess; but knowest thou not how difficult it is for the best hearts to stifle their resentment?

B A Y A R D.

I know it well: but true courage consists in stifling them. If you know your fault, make haste to repair it: as for me, I die, and think myself happier than you in your prosperity. Although the emperor should not deceive you; though he should even give you his sister in marriage, and share France with you; he would never efface the stain that blemishes your life. The constable of Bourbon a rebel! Ah! what foul disgrace! Hear what dying Bayard says to you, who, as during his lifetime, so at his death, speaks with truth and sincerity.



DIALOGUE X.

LEWIS XII. AND FRANCIS I.

*A king had far better be the father of his country,
by governing his kingdom peaceably, than be a
great conqueror.*

LEWIS XII.

EAR cousin, tell me some news of France. I always loved my subjects as if they had been my children. I confess I am under great concern for them now. You were very young in every respect when I left you the crown. How have you governed my poor kingdom?

FRANCIS I.

I have met with some misfortunes ; but if you would have me be free with you, my reign has made France more splendid than ever yours did.

LEWIS XII.

Good God ! 'twas that splendour I always dreaded ; I knew you from your infancy to be of a disposition to ruin the finances, to hazard every thing for war, to bear nothing with patience, to subvert all order within the state, and to create all manner of confusion, on purpose to be talked of.

FRANCIS I.

Old people are always thus prejudiced against their successors ; but, let me tell you, I maintained a dreadful war against Charles V. emperor of Germany, and king of Spain. In Italy I gained the famous battles of Marignan over the Swiss, and of

Cherishes over the Imperialists. I saw the king of England confederated with the emperor against France, and I rendered their joint efforts ineffectual : I cultivated the sciences : I deserved to be immortalized by men of letters : I revived the Augustan age in my court. I there introduced magnificence, politeness, erudition and gallantry. Till my time every thing was rude, poor, ignorant, and truly Gaulish ; in fine, I got myself styled the father of learning.

LEWIS XII.

That was noble ; and I would by no means lessen the glory of it : but still I had rather you had been father of the people, than father of learning. Have you left the French in peace and plenty ?

FRANCIS I.

No ; but my son, who is young, will carry on the war ; and it will fall to his share at length to ease the exhausted people. You spared them more than I have done ; but then you carried your war but very faintly on.

LEWIS XII.

What great success have you had in it ? What conquests have you made ? Did you take the kingdom of Naples ?

FRANCIS I.

No ; I had other expeditions to perform.

LEWIS XII.

You have preserved the Milanese at least !

FRANCIS I.

Some unforeseen accidents unluckily befel me.

LEWIS XII.

What accidents ? Has Charles V. taken it from you ? Have you lost any battle ? Speak ; thou darfst not tell all.

FRANCIS I.

I was taken in the battle of Pavia.

LEWIS XII.

Taken! alas, into how many misfortunes hath evil counsel plunged you! 'Tis thus then you surpassed me in war. You have re-involved France in the miseries she suffered under king John. O poor France, how do I pity thee! I plainly foresaw it. Well, I understand you, you have been fain to part with whole provinces, and to pay immense sums. Such is the upshot of that pride, that haughtiness, that rashness, that ambition! And how goes the administration of justice?

FRANCIS I.

It stood me in great stead, for I sold all the offices.

LEWIS XII.

And the judges, to reimburse themselves, must sell all their sentences. But was all this money you raised duly applied towards raising and maintaining the army with oeconomy?

FRANCIS I.

A part of it was requisite for the magnificence of my court.

LEWIS XII.

I'll engage your mistresses have had a greater share of it than the best officers of the army; insomuch that the people are ruined; war still flaming; justice become venal; the court given up to all the follies of gallantish women; in short, the whole state in a miserable condition. Such is that shining reign which hath so far eclipsed mine. Had you used a little more moderation, you would have been far more honourable.

FRANCIS I.

But I have done several great things which have made me extolled as a hero: I am called the great king Francis.

LEWIS XII.

That is, you have been flattered for your money; and you were willing to be a hero at the expense of the state, whose prosperity should have been your greatest glory.

FRANCIS I.

The praises bestowed on me were sincere.

LEWIS XII.

Ah! was there ever any king so weak or so corrupt, as not to have had as many praises given him as you received? Shew me the most unworthy of all princes, and I shall shew him as highly extolled as ever you were. After that, purchase praise, if you choose it, at the price of so much blood, and of such sums of money as have ruined a kingdom.

FRANCIS I.

I had the glory, however, of bearing my misfortunes with constancy and courage.

LEWIS XII.

It would have been much better for you to have wanted an opportunity of displaying that constancy. The people wanted no such heroism. But did not the hero grow weary of his prison?

FRANCIS I.

Yes indeed, and my liberty cost me very dear.



DIALOGUE XI.

CHARLES V. OF FRANCE, AND
A YOUNG MONK OF ST. JUST.

Disquiet often obliges us to seek solitude, which those who are accustomed to the noise and hurry of the world can never relish.

CHARLES.

COME, brother, 'tis time to arise ; you sleep too long for a young novice, who ought to be vigilant and fervent.

MONK.

When would you have me sleep, but whilst I am young ? Sleep is not inconsistent with fervour.

CHARLES.

When a person loves the service, he is soon awaked.

MONK.

Yes, at your majesty's age; but at mine people can sleep without a feather-bed.

CHARLES.

Well then, brother, it belongs to people of my age to awaken those who oversleep themselves.

MONK.

And have you got nothing better to do after so long disturbing the whole world's repose? Can you not leave me to mine?

CHARLES.

I think that in this solitude we enjoy repose enough, though we should rise betimes.

M O N K.

I understand your sacred majesty; when you get up early here, you find the day wondrous long, having been accustomed to greater motions: Come, own it freely; you are weary of having nothing here to do but to pray, to wind up your clocks, and to wake poor novices, who have no share in the cause of your uneasiness.

C H A R L E S.

I have yet twelve servants which I reserved myself.

M O N K.

A poor conversation theirs for a man who corresponded with all the nations of the known world.

C H A R L E S.

I have a little horse to ride out upon in this beauteous valley, which is adorned with oranges, myrtles, pomegranates, laurels, and with a thousand different flowers, and in which so many bleating flocks are grazing.

M O N K.

All these are fine things, but none of them speak. You want a little noise and bustle.

C H A R L E S.

I have a pension of an hundred thousand crowns.

M O N K.

And poorly paid. The king, your son, is not very punctual.

C H A R L E S.

'Tis true that people, who have stript and degraded themselves, are very soon forgot.

M O N K.

~~Did~~ you not expect this, when you parted with your crowns?

CHARLES.

I foresaw what would happen.

MONK.

If you expected it, why do you wonder to see it happen? Keep to your first resolution: renounce all things; forget all things; no longer desire any thing; be at rest yourself, and let others be at rest with you.

CHARLES.

But my son has made no good use of the victory he obtained at St. Quintin: he should have been before the gates of Paris by this time. The count d'Egmont has gained him another battle at Gravelines, and he is losing all his advantages. There is Calais retaken from the English by the duke of Guise. The same duke hath taken Thionville, in order to cover Metz. Ah! my son governs badly: he follows none of my counsels: he pays me not my pension: he despises my conduct, and the most faithful servants I employed. All this vexes and disquiets me.

MONK.

And did you come to seek repose in this solitude, only upon condition, that the king, your son, should make conquests, should follow your counsels, and execute all your projects?

CHARLES.

No; but I was in hopes he would have behaved better.

MONK.

Since you have abandoned all for the sake of tranquillity, enjoy it, whatever happen; let the king, your son, do as he will: make not your tranquillity to depend upon the wars, which torment the world. You left it for no other end, but to

hear no more of it. But, say the truth, you knew very little about retirement when you first sought it. It was through disquiet, that you desired repose.

CHARLES.

Alas, my child, you are very right, and I heartily wish that you may not be mistaken in your design, when you renounced the world, to come and be a novice here.



DIALOGUE XII.

CHARLES V. OF SPAIN, AND FRANCIS I. OF FRANCE.

Justice and happiness consist in honesty, courage and uprightness.

CHARLES V.

THE business of life is now over, and it would be but reasonable that we should come to an eclaircissement concerning the vexations we have given each other.

FRANCIS I.

You have dealt very unjustly and deceitfully by me. I never did you any harm but in fair and open war: but you extorted from me, while I was in confinement, the homage of the county of Flanders: the vassal employed force to give laws to his master.

CHARLES V.

You had the liberty of not renouncing your title, if you pleased.

F R A N C I S I.

Has any man his liberty in prison?

C H A R L E S V.

Cowards have not; but when a person has true courage, he is free every where. If I had asked your crown of you, would your impatience of confinement have reduced you to yield it up to me?

F R A N C I S I.

No, doubtless: I would sooner have died than been guilty of so base an action; but, as for the dependency of the county of Flanders, I gave it up to you through weariness of captivity; through fear of being poisoned; through a desire of returning to my kingdom, where every thing stood in need of my presence; in fine, by reason of my languishing state, which threatened me with approaching death: and I really believe I should have died had not my sister come to me.

C H A R L E S V.

Not only a brave king, but a true soldier, would rather die than give a promise, unless he resolved to keep it, at whatever cost. Nothing is so shameful as to say one has not had courage to suffer; and that a man has delivered himself by forfeiting his honour. If you were persuaded that it was unlawful for you to sacrifice the dignity of your dominions to the liberty of your person, you should have had the resolution to die in captivity; you should have sent orders to your subjects no longer to reckon upon you, and to crown your son: by so doing, you would have confounded me vastly. A prisoner who has courage enough to do this, sets himself at liberty even in his prison, and escapes out of the hands of those who detain him.

FRANCIS I.

Those maxims are just. I acknowledge that weariness and impatience made me promise what was contrary to the interest of my dominions, and what I could neither execute nor elude with honour. But is it your part to make me such a reproach? was not your whole life one continued breach of faith? besides, my weakness does by no means excuse you: a man of intrepidity, 'tis true, will rather suffer death than promise any thing he cannot perform: but a just man will never abuse the weakness of another, so as to extort from him, in his captivity, a promise which he neither can nor ought to perform. What would you have done, had I detained you in France, when you passed through there, sometime after my confinement, in your way to the Low Countries? I might have demanded of you the cession of the Netherlands and of the Milanese, which you had usurped from me.

CHARLES V.

I had your promise, that I should pass safely through France; but you had not mine, that you should come freely into Spain.

FRANCIS I.

I had not, and so far the difference, I confess, is great. But as you had dealt so unjustly by me whilst in prison, by forcing me to a disadvantageous treaty, I might have repaired that injury, by forcing you, in my turn, to another more equitable: besides, I might have detained you with me, 'till such time as you had restored me the Milanese, which was lawfully my own.

CHARLES V.

Hold; you join several things together, which I must separate. I never broke my word to you

at Madrid ; and you would have broke yours to me at Paris, had you arrested me upon any pretence of restitution, how just soever it might have been : it was in your power to have demanded restitution, as a preliminary to my passage : but, as you did not demand it, you could not exact it in France, without violating your word of honour : besides, do you think it lawful to repel fraud by fraud ? if one deceit should occasion another, there is no longer any thing sure among men ; and the fatal consequences of such a chain extend to infinity. The safest way of revenging yourself on the deceitful, is to repel all his stratagems without deceiving him.

FRANCIS I.

What a sublime philosophy ! this is downright Platonism. But I see plainly you have managed your matters more subtilly than I : my terror lay in trusting you. The constable of Montmorency helped to deceive me. He persuaded me, that I ought to put you upon honour, by granting you to pass without terms. You had already promised to give the investiture of the dutchy of Milan to the youngest of my three sons : but, after your passing through France, you retracted your promise. If I had not hearkened to Montmorency, I would have made you restore the Milanese, before I let you pass into the Netherlands. I never could forgive my favourite this piece of bad counsel, and I banished him my court upon it.

CHARLES V.

Rather than restore the Milanese, I would have crossed the sea.

FRANCIS I.

Your health, the season, and the dangers of the voyage, would not have permitted you to do that,

But, after all, why play upon me so unworthily in the face of all Europe, and abuse the most generous hospitality?

CHARLES V.

I would have given the dutchy of Milan to your third son. A duke of Milan of the house of France would have troubled me no more than the other princes of Italy. But your second son, for whom you demanded that investiture, was too nearly allied to the crown; there was none betwixt you and him but the dauphin, and he died. Had I given the investiture to the second, he would have found himself, at once, king of France, and duke of Milan; and so all Italy would have been in slavery for ever. This I foresaw; and this it was my duty to prevent.

FRANCIS I.

It would have been only one slavery for another. Had it not been better to have restored the Milanese to its lawful master, which was I, than to have retained it without the least appearance of right? The French, who now had not an inch of ground in Italy, were less to be dreaded in the Milanese, as to the public liberty, than the house of Austria vested with the kingdom of Naples, and with the rights of the empire over all the fiefs which hold of it in that country. For my part, I'll tell you freely, all subtlety apart, the difference of our two cases. You had always address enough to put the forms on your side, and to overreach me in the main: but, through weakness, impatience, or levity, I took not sufficient precautions, and the forms were generally against me. So I was a deceiver only in appearance, and you, without appearing such, were one in reality. As for me, I was punished enough for my faults at

the time I committed them: for you, I hope the false policy of your son will sufficiently revenge me of your unjust ambition. He forced you to strip yourself of all in your life-time. You died a degraded wretch, who once proposed to enslave Europe. That son of yours will finish his work: his jealousy and distrust will crush all ambition and virtue among the Spaniards. Merit grown suspected and odious will not dare to appear. Spain will no more have any great captain, nor exalted genius in negotiation, nor military discipline, nor good polity amongst the people. That king ever hid, and inaccessible like the kings of the East, will ruin Spain within, and occasion the revolt of the distant nations which hold of that monarchy. That great body will fall by its own weight, and will serve only as a monument of the vanity of too great exaltation. A state at unity in itself, though of but a moderate extent, when well peopled, well ordered, and well cultivated in useful arts and sciences; when, moreover, it is governed, according to the laws, with moderation, by a prince who distributes justice himself, and goes to war in person, promises somewhat happier than your monarchy, which now wants an head to re-unite the government. If you will not believe me, wait patiently for the coming of some of your great-grand-children, who will inform you better.

C H A R L E S. V.

Alas! I am but sensible of the truth of your predictions. The prospect of those misfortunes that will overthrow all my schemes made me quit the reins of empire, and disquieted me even in my solitary retirement.



DIALOGUE XIII.

HENRY III. OF FRANCE, AND
THE DUCHESS OF MONT-
PENSIER.

One may keep in with the different parties and humours of a state, without being either an hypocrite or a knave.

H E N R Y.

Good-morrow, cousin: I hope we are friends, after death?

M O N T P E N S I E R.

By no means. I cannot forgive your massacres, and especially the blood of my family, which you have so cruelly shed.

H E N R Y.

You upbraid me with things which did you less mischief than your confederacy in Paris did me: so let us balance accounts, and be good friends.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

No; I shall never be a friend to a man who ordered the horrid massacre of Blois.

H E N R Y.

But the duke of Guise had provoked me to the last degree. Have you forgot the barricade-day, when he would needs be king of Paris, and drove me from the Louvre? I was obliged to save myself through the Tuilleries and the convent of the Feuillants.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

But he had made up matters with you through the mediation of the queen mother. They say you had communicated with him, both breaking the same host: and that you had sworn his preservation.

H E N R Y.

My enemies have advanced many other things without proof, to give the greater sanction to the League; but, in short, I could no longer have been king, had not your brother perished.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

That is, you could not reign, without deceiving and butchering people. Strange ways of maintaining authority! why sign the union? why cause it to be signed by every body at the states of Blois? you should have made a stout resistance; that was the true way of being king. Royalty, rightly understood, consists in holding fast by reason, and making one's self obeyed.

H E N R Y.

But I was obliged to oppose cunning and policy to force.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

You wanted to soothe both the Hugonots and Catholics; and so rendered yourself contemptible to both.

H E N R Y.

No, I did by no means endeavour to soothe the Hugonots.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

The queen's conferences with them, and the pains you took to flatter them, whenever you wanted to counterbalance the union-party, rendered you suspected by all the Catholics.

HENRY.

But did I not, upon all occasions, endeavour to shew my zeal for religion?

MONTPENSIER.

Yes, by a thousand ridiculous grimaces, which were belied by as many scandalous actions. To go in masquerade of a Shrove-Tuesday, and on Ash-Wednesday to the procession in a penitent's sackcloth, with a great whip in your hand; from your girdle to dangle a swinging chaplet an ell-long, with beads so many little Death's heads, and at the same time to suspend from a ruban at your neck a basket full of little Spaniels, whose maintenance cost you an hundred thousand crowns; to spend one part of your life in brotherhoods, vows, pilgrimages, oratories, with Feuillants, Minims, and Jeromites brought from Spain; and the other with your infamous minions: to be ever carving and pasting of images, and diving at the same time into the curiosities of magic, into the impiety and policy of Machiavel: in fine, to run at the ring like a woman; to treat your minions with repasts served by naked women with dishevelled hair; and then to play the devotee, every where hunting after hermitages! what inconsistency! and indeed they say Miron your physician assured, that that malignant humour, which occasioned so many extravagant oddities, would soon either kill you, or make you run mad.

HENRY.

All that was necessary in order to humour different tempers. I indulged the debauched in pleasures, and was godly with the devotees, in order to possess both.

MONTPENSIER.

And very well you possessed them. "Twas that

made people say you were good for nothing but to
be clipt for a monk.

H E N R Y.

I have by no means forgot those scissars you shewed
every body, saying you wore them to clip me.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

You had affronted me enough to deserve that
insult.

H E N R Y.

But, after all, what could I do? I had to please
all parties.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

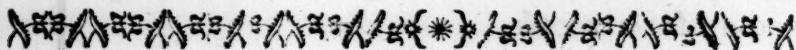
It is not pleasing them, to betray weakness, dis-
simulation and hypocrisy on all sides.

H E N R Y.

So you may talk at your ease. But one stands
in need of a great many people, when he finds so
many ready to revolt.

M O N T P E N S I E R.

Behold your cousin the king of Navarre, and see
the difference between you. You found your king-
dom entirely in subjection, and you left it involved
in a civil war. He, without dissimulation, massa-
cre, or hypocrisy, hath conquered the whole king-
dom which refused to acknowledge him; he kept
the Hugonots in his interest; though he quitted their
religion. He won the hearts of all the Catholics,
and dissolved the powerful league. Think not to
excuse yourself; things are to be estimated by the
effects they are made to produce.



DIALOGUE XIV.

HENRY III. AND HENRY IV.

The difference between a king, who, by barbarity and cunning, makes himself feared and hated, and a king who makes himself beloved by his sincerity and disinterestedness.

HENRY III.

WELL, cousin, you are fallen into the same misfortune with myself.

HENRY IV.

My death was violent as well as yours: but none regretted you save your minions; and that because of the immense wealth you so profusely lavished upon them. As for me, every family in France deplored me, as their general father. I shall in after-ages be proposed as a model of a good and wise king. I began to establish peace, plenty, and good order in the kingdom.

HENRY III.

When I was slain at Saint-Cloud, I had already broken the confederacy; and Paris was on the point of surrendering; so that I should soon have recovered my former authority.

HENRY IV.

But how could you recover your blackened reputation? you were accounted a knave, an hypocrite, a profane, effeminate, and dissolute person. When once a man has lost the reputation of probity and honour, he never hath a quiet and secure au-

thority. You got rid of the two Guises at Blois, but you could never get rid of all those who abhorred your deceits.

HENRY III.

And do you not know, that the art of dissembling is the art of reigning?

HENRY IV.

Fine maxims! instilled I suppose by Duguaist. The abbot of Elbene, and the other Italians, had filled your head with the politics of Machiavel. The queen, your mother, had trained you up in those notions; but she found good reason to repent it: she met with what she deserved: she had taught you to be unnatural; and unnatural you proved to her.

HENRY III.

But how can one act sincerely, and confide in men, seeing that they are all so disguised and corrupted?

HENRY IV.

You think so, because you never saw honest men, and do not think there can be any such in the world; but you did not seek after them; on the contrary, you shunned them, and they shunned you; they were suspicious and obnoxious to you. You wanted only villains, who could invent you new pleasures, execute the blackest crimes, and in whose company nothing should put you in mind of either violated religion or virtue. With such morals 'tis impossible to find men of worth. As for me, I found some: I knew how to employ them in my council, in foreign negotiations, in divers capacities; for instance, Sully, Jeannin, d'Offat, and others.

HENRY III.

To hear you talk, one would take you for a Cato; but your youth was as irregular as mine.

HENRY IV.

"Tis true, I was inexcusable in my shameful passion for the women; but, in all my irregularities, I was never either a deceitful, wicked, or impious person; I was only weak. Misfortunes proved of great service to me; for I was naturally lazy, and too much addicted to pleasure. Had I been born to the throne, I should have, perhaps, dishonoured myself; but ill fortune to overcome, and my kingdom to conquer, obliged me to soar above myself.

HENRY III.

How many fine opportunities did you lose of overcoming your enemies, while you loitered on the banks of the Garonne, and sighed for the countess of Guiche? you were like Hercules at Omphale's distaff.

HENRY IV.

I cannot deny it: but then Coutras, Yvry, Arques, Fontaine-Françoise make some amends for this.

HENRY III.

And did not I win the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour?

HENRY IV.

You did; but king Henry III. ill supported the hopes that had been conceived of the duke of Anjou. Henry IV. on the contrary, excelled the king of Navarre.

HENRY III.

Then you think I never heard of the duchess of Beaufort, of the marchionesses of Verneuil, of the—? but there are so many of them, I cannot enumerate them all.

HENRY IV.

I disown none of them, and stand condemned;

"but I made myself both beloved and feared. I abhorred that cruel and deceitful policy with which you were so poisoned, and which occasioned all your misfortunes. I made war with vigour. Abroad I concluded a lasting peace; at home I regulated the state, and rendered it flourishing. I reduced the nobles to their duty; nay, even the most insolent favourites: and all this without deceiving, without butchering; without doing any injustice, confiding in honest men, and placing all my glory in easing my people."



DIALOGUE XV.

HENRY IV. AND THE DUKE OF
MAYENNE.

Adverse fortune makes kings good, and heroes great:

HENRY.

Cousin, I have forgot all that is past, and
am very glad to see you.

MAYENNE.

Your majesty is too kind in passing over my faults thus. There is nothing I would not do to efface the remembrance of them.

HENRY.

Let us take a turn in that walk betwixt the two canals; and we'll talk over affairs.

MAYENNE.

With pleasure I will follow your majesty.

HENRY.

Well, cousin, I am no longer that poor Bernese

they wanted to expel the kingdom. Do you remember the time when we were at Arques, and you sent word to Paris, that you had driven me to the sea-side; and that I had now no way to escape, but by plunging into the waters?

M A Y E N N E.

It is true; but it is also true, that you were upon the point of submitting to your adverse fortune; and that you would have retreated into England, had not Biron represented to you the consequences of such a flight.

H E N R Y.

You speak freely, cousin; nor do I take it amiss. Go on, and with the same freedom say whatever you think fit.

M A Y E N N E.

I have, perhaps, said too much: for kings don't chuse to have things called by their right names. They are so used to flattery, that they make it a part of their dignity. The honest freedom with which we speak to other men offends them; they will not have us to open our mouths but in their praise and admiration. We must not treat them like men, but always say they are heroes.

H E N R Y.

You speak so knowingly, that 'tis plain you have had some experience. Thus probably you were flattered and adored, while you were king of Paris.

M A Y E N N E.

It is true, I was amused with abundance of idle flatteries, which fed me with false hopes, and made me commit some great faults.

H E N R Y.

For my part, I was instructed by my adverse fortune; such lessons are hard, but wholesome; and I

shall ever retain so much good from them, as to be more willing than any body to hear truth concerning myself. Therefore, dear cousin, if you love me, speak it freely.

M A Y E N N E.

All our mistakes proceeded from the idea we had formed of you in your youth; we knew the ladies were your constant amusement; that the countess of Guiche had made you lose all the advantages of the battle of Coutras; that you had been jealous of your cousin the prince of Conde, who seemed more steady, more serious, and more assiduous than you in application to public affairs, and who had a good understanding and great virtue. We looked upon you as a soft and effeminate person, whom the queen-mother had deceived by a thousand love-intrigues, who had done any thing required of him at Bartholomew-tide towards the innovation of religion; who had also submitted, after the conspiracy of La Mole, to whatever the court had a mind. In short, we hoped to have an easy purchase of you—but really, Sir, I cannot go on: I'm all in a sweat, and out of breath; your majesty is as light and clever as I am fat and unwieldy. I can no longer keep pace with you.

H E N R Y.

I own, cousin, I endeavoured to tire you; but it is the only mischief I shall ever do you in my life. So make an end, pray, of what you have begun.

M A Y E N N E.

You surprized us very much, when we saw you on horse-back, night and day, performing actions with an incredible vigour and diligence, at Cahors, at Lause in Gascony, at Arques in Normandy, at

Yvry before Paris, at Arnay-le Due, and at Fontaine-Françoise: thou hast the art to win the confidence of the Catholics, without losing the Huguenots; you chose persons capable and worthy of your trust for business. You consulted them without jealousy, and knew how to make use of their good counsels, without suffering yourself to be governed; you were every where before hand with us; you were become quite another man, steady, vigilant, laborious, as exact in all your duties as we formerly had thought you otherwise.

HENRY.

I see that all those bold truths you were to utter end in praises. But take along with you what I told you at first, which is, that I owe whatever I am to my adverse fortune. Had I found myself presently upon the throne, surrounded with pomp, delights and flatteries, I should have dissolved in pleasures; my natural tendency was effeminacy: but I felt the contradiction of men, and became sensible of the harm my failings might do me: I found it necessary to correct them; to bring myself under; to constrain myself; to follow good counsels; to profit by my faults; to enter into all affairs. This is what was the making of me, and must be so of every man.



DIALOGUE XVI.

HENRY IV. AND SIXTUS V.

Great men love and esteem one another, let their interests be ever so opposite.

SIXTUS.

I HAVE for this great while been desirous of seeing you. While we were both living, that was hardly possible. Conferences between popes and kings were out of fashion in our time: but they were not so, when Leo X and Francis I. had an interview at Bologna; and when Clement VII. met the same king at Marseilles, in order to the marriage of Catharine of Medicis. I should have been overjoyed to have had such a conference with you; but I was not at liberty, nor did your religion allow it me.

HENRY.

How greatly are you softened! Death, I see, has brought you to reason. Say the truth, you were not the same person when I was but the poor excommunicated Bernese.

SIXTUS.

I will open my mind freely to you now. At first, I thought the only way was to prosecute you. I had by this means greatly embarrassed your predecessor; and indeed I made him heartily repent his having dared to cause the butchering of a cardinal of the holy church. Had the duke of Guise only been put to death, he might have come off easier:

but to attack the sacred purple was a crime beyond remission: I could not tolerate an outrage of so dangerous consequence. It appeared to me essential, after your cousin's death, to use you with the same rigour I had done him; to spirit up the league, and, by all means, to prevent an heretic's ascending the throne of France: but I soon perceived that you would overcome the confederacy, and your courage gave me a good opinion of you. There were two persons, whom I could not, in any decency, be a friend to, though I naturally loved them both.

H E N R Y.

And pray who were those two persons, who had been so happy as to please you?

S I X T U S.

Yourself and queen Elisabeth of England.

H E N R Y.

I do not at all wonder at her pleasing you; for in the first place, she was a pope as well as you, being head of the church of England; and a pope too as haughty as yourself. She had the knack of getting herself feared, and of making heads fly upon occasion: 'tis this, doubtless, that acquired her your esteem.

S I X T U S.

It did her no harm; I love people of spirit, and such as know how to make themselves masters of others. The merit I discovered in you, and which won my affection, was your having defeated the league, managed the nobility, and kept the balance between the Catholics and Hugonots. A man who can do all this is really a man; and I don't despise him, as I did his predecessor, who ruined every thing by his softness, and retrieved himself only by knavery. Had I lived, I would have received you

to abjuration, without making you languish. You should have got off for a little scourging of yourself, and a few gentle lashes, and declaring that you received the crown of France from the bounty of the holy see.

HENRY.

I would have begun the war again, rather than have made any such acknowledgment.

SIXTUS.

I like this boldness of yours: but it was for want of being sufficiently supported by my successors, that you were exposed to so many conspiracies, which ended in your destruction.

HENRY.

True; but were you spared yourself? the Spanish cabal treated you no better than me; there is no great difference between a dagger and a bowel of poison. But let us go and pay a visit to that worthy queen you are so fond of; she found means to reign longer and more peaceably than any of us.



DIALOGUE XVII.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND CARDINAL XIMENES.

Virtue is preferable to illustrious birth.

XIMENES.

NOW that we are together, I conjure you to tell me if it be true that you endeavoured to imitate me.

R I C H L I E U.

No; I was too desirous of true glory ever to copy after any man. I always shewed a bold and original genius.

X I M E N E S.

I heard you had taken Rochelle, as I had Otran; overthrew the Hugonots, as I overthrew the Moors of Granada, in order to convert them; protected learning, humbled the pride of the nobility, raised the royal authority, established the Sorbonne like my university of Alcala de Hennara; and that you were promoted by the interest of queen Mary of Medicis, as I had been by that of Isabel of Castile.

R I C H L I E U.

There is some resemblance, I own, between us, all owing to pure chance; but I had no model in my view. I contented myself with doing things as time and circumstances offered for the glory of France: besides, our stations were very different. I was born at court; and had been bred there from a child. I was bishop of Lucon, and secretary of state, nearly attached to the queen, and the marshal d'Ancre. All this has nothing in common with an obscure and friendless monk, who enters not into the world, and upon affairs, till he was sixty years of age.

X I M E N E S.

Nothing does me more honour, than my entering so late upon them. I never had ambitious or sanguine views. My life was far spent, and I thought to have finished it in the cloister; but the cardinal de Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, made me confessor to the queen; and the queen, prepossessed in my favour, made me successor to that cardinal in the archbishopric of Toledo, contrary to the desire

of the king, who wanted to get in his bastard: afterwards I became the queen's chief counsellor in her troubles with regard to the king. After Ferdinand had made the conquest of Granada, I undertook the conversion of its inhabitants. The queen died, and I then found myself between Ferdinand and his son-in-law Philip of Austria. I rendered great services to Ferdinand after the death of Philip. I procured the royal authority to the father-in-law. In spite of the grandees, I managed affairs with vigour. I conquered Oran, being there in person, managing every thing myself; having no king there to share the action, as you had at Rochelle, and at the straits of Susa. After Ferdinand's death, I was regent in young prince Charles' absence: 'twas I who kept the commons of Spain from commencing the revolt, which happened after my death. I changed the second infant Ferdinand's governor and officers, who wanted to make him king, to the prejudice of his elder brother. At last, I died calm and serene, having lost all authority through the artifice of the Flemings, who prejudiced king Charles against me. In all this I never made one step towards preferment. Public business came to me without my seeking; nor had I in the management of them an eye to any thing but the public good. This is more honourable than being born at court, son to a grand prevot, and a knight of the order.

RICHIEU.

An illustrious birth does not at all lessen the merit of great actions.

XIMENES.

It does not. But since you urge me, I will tell you, that disinterestedness and moderation are better than to be high born.

R I C H L I E U.

Do you pretend to compare your administration with mine? Did you change the system of the government of all Europe? I overthrew the house of Austria which you served; I brought into the heart of Germany a victorious king of Sweden, made Catalonia revolt, recovered the kingdom of Portugal which was usurped by the Spaniards, and filled Christendom with my negotiations.

X I M E N E S.

I own I must not compare my negotiations with yours; but I supported all the most difficult affairs of Castile with steadiness, without interest, ambition, vanity or weakness; and that is more than you can say.



DIALOGUE XVIII.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND
CHANCELLOR OXENSTIERNE.

The difference between a minister who acts through pride, and one who acts for the love of his country.

R I C H L I E U.

THERE has been no minister in Europe like me since my death.

O X E N S T I E R N E.

No; none has had the authority you were possessed of.

R I C H L I E U.

You mistake me, I speak of genius for govern-

ment; and I may, without vanity, say of myself, as I would of another in my place, that I left not my equal behind me.

OXENSTIERNE.

When you talk thus, do you consider that I was neither cit nor yeoman; and that I dealt as much in politics as another?

RICHLIEU.

You! 'tis true you gave some advice to your king; but he undertook nothing but upon the treaties he made with France; that is to say, with me.

OXENSTIERNE.

True; but I engaged him to enter into those treaties.

RICHLIEU.

I had intelligence of facts from father Joseph; and then I took my measures by what Charnace had occasion more nearly to observe.

OXENSTIERNE.

Your father Joseph was a whimsical monk: as for Charnace, he was a good negotiator; but, without me, nothing had ever been done. The great Gustavus at first stood in need of every thing, and was forced to be obliged to France for money; but afterwards he beat the Bavarians and Imperialists, and retrieved the Protestant party through all Germany. Had he lived after the battle of Lutzen, he would have greatly embarrassed France itself, already alarmed at his progress, and would have been the principal power in Europe. You now repented, but too late, your having assisted him: nay, you were even suspected of being accessory to his death.

RICHLIEU.

I am as innocent of it as you.

OXENSTIERNE.

I believe it. But it was a sad thing that nobody could die in good time for you, without your being immediately believed the author of his death. Now that suspicion could proceed from nothing but the idea you had given of yourself by the main tenour of your conduct, in which you sacrificed, without scruple, the life of men to your own greatness.

RICHLIEU.

That policy is necessary in some certain cases.

OXENSTIERNE.

Its necessity was always doubted by honest men.

RICHLIEU.

That is what you never doubted more than myself; but, after all, what so mighty feats have you done in Europe; you, who are vain enough to compare your ministry with mine? You were counsellor to a petty barbarous king, to a Goth, captain of banditti, and in pay of the king of France, to whom I was minister.

OXENSTIERNE.

My master's crown was not equal to your master's: but that is what constitutes both Gustavus's glory and mine. We came out of a wild and barren country, without troops, without artillery, without money: we disciplined our soldiers, formed officers, vanquished the triumphant armies of the Imperialists, changed the face of Europe, and left behind us generals who taught the art of war to all the great men of their time.

RICHLIEU.

There is some truth in what you say: but, to hear you, one would think you had been as great a general as Gustavus.

OXENSTIERNE.

Not so great, but I understood the art of war; and that I sufficiently shewed after my master's death.

RICHIEU.

Had you not Tortenson, Bannier, and the duke of Weimar, on whom depended every thing?

OXENSTIERNE.

I was not only employed in negotiations for maintaining the league; I assisted also at all the councils of war; and those great men will tell you, that I had the principal share in all those glorious campaigns.

RICHIEU.

Probably you was in the council, when the battle of Norlinguen was lost, which demolished the league.

OXENSTIERNE.

I was in the council: but 'tis the duke of Weimar's business to answer for that battle, which he lost. When it was lost, I supported the dispirited party. The Swedish army continued in a foreign country, where it subsisted by my resourcess. It was I who formed by my cares a little conquered kingdom, which the duke of Weimar would have preserved had he lived, and which you basely usurped after his death. You have seen me in France seeking assistance for my master, without troubling my head about your haughtiness, which would have hurt my master's interest, had not I been more moderate, and more zealous for my country than you were for yours. You rendered yourself odious to your nation: I was the darling and glory of mine. I returned to the wild rocks whence I came. I died there in peace, and all Europe now rings with my name as it did with yours. I had neither your dig-

nities, riches, nor power; nor your poets nor orators to flatter me. I have nothing on my side but the good opinion of the Swedes, and that of all sensible readers of history and negotiation. I acted according to my religion against the Catholic Imperialists, who ever since the battle of Prague tyrannized over all Germany. You, (like a false priest) by our means retrieved the Protestants, and crushed the Catholics in Germany. Now judge of the difference between us.

R I C H L I E U.

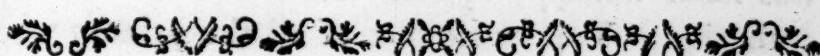
This was an inconvenience that could not be avoided, without leaving Europe entirely in the thrall-dom of the house of Austria, which was aiming at universal monarchy: but, after all, I cannot forbear laughing to see a chancellor give himself out for a brave general.

O X E N S T I E R N E.

I do not pretend to have been a general, but to have been very serviceable to the generals in the counsils of war. I leave to you the glory of having appeared on horse-back in arms, and in a trooper's dress at the pass of Susa. Nay, they say you had yourself drawn at Richlieu on horse-back, with a buff-coat, a scarf, plumes, and a commander's staff.

R I C H L I E U.

Your reproaches grow very satirical. Farewel.



DIALOGUE XIX.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND
CARDINAL MAZARIN.

The characters of these two ministers, and the difference between true and false policy.

RICHLIEU.

SO you are come here, lord Julius! They say you governed France after me. How have you done? Have you compleatly united Europe against the house of Austria? Have you overthrown the Hugonot party which I had weakened? In a word, have you humbled and weakened the great men?

MAZARIN.

You had begun these things; but I had many other difficulties to deal with: I had a stormy regency to weather.

RICHLIEU.

A king who will not apply himself, and is jealous of the very minister that serves him, gives much more trouble in the cabinet, than the weakness and confusion of a regency. You had a pretty steady queen, and under whom affairs might be more easily managed than under a crabbed king, who was ever exasperated against me by some growing favourite. Such a prince can neither govern himself, nor will he suffer others to govern. One must serve him whether he will or no, and does it not, but by running daily the greatest hazards. My life

was made unhappy by him of whom I held all my authority. You know that of all the princes who thwarted the siege of Rochelle, the king, my master, was he that gave me most trouble. I gave, however, the mortal blow to the Hugonot party, which had so many places of strength, and so many formidable heads. I carried the war into the heart of the house of Austria. The world will never forget the revolt of Catalonia; the impenetrable secresy with which Portugal prepared to shake off the unjust yoke of the Spaniards; Holland supported by our alliance in a long war against the same power; all the allies of the North, of the empire, and of Italy, attached to me personally, as to a man incapable of failing them; and then at home the great men brought within the bounds of their duty. I found them intractable, glorying in their cabals against all those to whom the king committed his authority, and thinking themselves obliged to obey the king himself, only so far as he bribed them to it, by gratifying their ambition, and by giving them a boundless power in their respective governments.

M A Z A R I N.

As for me, I was a stranger; every thing was against me; I had nothing to trust to but my own industry. I begun with insinuating myself into the queen's favour: I found means to remove the persons who had her ear: I defended myself against the cabals of the courtiers, against the furious parliament, against the Fronde, a party spirited up by a factious cardinal, jealous of my glory; in short, against a prince who was every year crowned with fresh laurels, and who employed the reputation of his victories only to destroy me with the more au-

thority; so many enemies did I scatter. Twice was I expelled the kingdom; twice did I re-enter it in triumph. During my very absence, 'twas I who governed the state. I drove the cardinal de Retz as far as Rome; I obliged the prince of Condé to flee into Flanders; in fine, I concluded a glorious peace, and left a young king, when I died, in a condition to give law to Europe. All this was done by the help of my genius, so fertile in expedients, to my dexterity in negotiation, and to the art I had of keeping men always big with some new expectation. But observe one thing, I never spilt one drop of blood.

RICHIEU.

No, you were weak, and too fearful to do it.

MAZARIN.

Fearful! did not I cause the three princes to be clapt up in Vincennes? The prince had to linger all the while in his confinement.

RICHIEU.

I could lay any wager, that you had neither courage to detain him, nor to deliver him; and that your perplexity was the true cause of the length of his confinement. But to come to the point; for my part, I did shed some blood; but it was necessary, in order to humble the pride of the grantees, ever ready to rise in rebellion. It is not very surprising, that a man who suffered all the courtiers and officers of the army to re-assume their ancient haughtiness, put none to death in so feeble a government.

MAZARIN.

A government is by no means feeble, when it compasses its ends by ingenuity without cruelty. 'Tis better to be a fox than a lion or a tyger.

R I C H L I E U .

It is not cruelty to punish the guilty, whose ill examples might be productive of others. Impunity never failing to bring on civil wars, it would have annihilated the king's authority, ruined the state, cost the blood of I don't know how many thousands ; whereas I established peace and authority, by sacrificing a few guilty persons ; besides, I never had any other enemies than those of the state.

M A Z A R I N .

That was because you thought yourself the state. You took it for granted, that no body could be a true Frenchman, without being in your pay.

R I C H L I E U .

Did you spare the first prince of the blood, when you thought he would oppose your interests ? In order to be in favour at court, was it not necessary to be a Mazarin ? I never carried suspicions and distrust to a greater height than you did. We both served the state ; and while we served it, each of us wanted to govern every thing ; you endeavoured to overcome your enemies by craft and cowardly artifice : I again overthrew mine by open force ; and I seriously believed that they sought my destruction, with no other view than to plunge France once more into the calamities and confusions out of which I had extricated her with so much difficulty. But however, I always kept my word ; I was a sincere friend, or an open foe ; I supported my master's authority with resolution and dignity ; those I used severely had only themselves to blame that they were not loaded with favours : I made all manner of advances towards them : I loved, I courted merit the moment I discovered it. All I wan-

ted, was, that they should not thwart my government, which I believed necessary to the safety of France. Had they been willing to serve the king according to their talents, according to my orders, they had been my friends.

M A Z A R I N.

Say rather your servants; well paid servants indeed: but they must have put up with a master, jealous, imperious, implacable in whatever touched his jealousy.

R I C H L I E U.

To be jealous and imperious are great faults, I must confess; but how many qualities had I, which speak an extensive genius, and an elevated soul? As for you, lord Julius, you betrayed nothing but cunning and covetousness; you did much worse to the French than shedding their blood. You corrupted their manners. You made probity unfashionable and ridiculous. I had but checked the pride of the great; you broke their spirit, degraded the nobility, confounded all ranks, and rendered all favours venal; you feared merit; there was no getting in with you, but by discovering a low, complying temper of mind, capable of the most villainous intrigues. You even had never a true knowledge of men; you could believe nothing but evil; all else to you was but mere fiction: none were for your purpose but tricking spirits, who should over-reach those with whom you had occasion to negotiate, or trading men, who should make you money of every thing. And so your name remains contemned and abhorred: on the contrary, I am assured that mine daily grows more honourable with the French nation.

MAZARIN.

Your inclinations were more noble than mine, and you had more grandeur in you: but you had withal a certain tincture of vanity and falsehood. For my part, I avoided that preposterous grandeur, as a ridiculous vanity: you had always about you poets, orators, and comedians: you were yourself a poet, orator, and a rival to Corneille: you composed books of devotion, without being devout: you would needs be a Jack of all trades, play the gallant, excel in every way. You swallowed down the praises of every author. Is there in Sorbonne a door, or a pane of glass, where you have not stuck up your arms?

RICHLIEU.

Your satire is pretty keen, and has something of a foundation in it. I am very sensible that true glory ought to spurn certain honours, which gross-judging vanity pursues; and that one dishonours himself by too eagerly desiring to be honoured: but, after all, I loved learning; I excited emulation to restore it. As for you, you never minded either the church, learning, arts, or virtue. Need we wonder, that so hateful a conduct raised all the grandes of the state, and all honest men, against such a foreigner?

MAZARIN.

You talk of nothing but your chimerical heroism: but for the well governing of a state, neither generosity, honesty, nor goodness of heart, are in question. The thing requisite, is a genius fruitful in expedients, impenetrable in designs, that is in nothing ruled by its passions, but in every thing by its interest, that is inexhaustible in resources to overcome difficulties.

R I C H L I E U.

True policy consists in never having occasion to deceive, and in always succeeding by honest means. 'Tis only through weakness, and for want of knowing the right way, that one strikes into by-paths, and has recourse to cunning. True policy consists in not amusing one's self with so many expedients, but in chusing directly, by a clear and distinct view, that which is best, when compared with others. This fertility of expedients proceeds less from extent and strength of genius, than from a want of strength, and justness of judgment. In short, true policy consists in being sensible that at long-run the greatest of all resources in affairs is the universal reputation of probity. You are never safe when you can get none in your interest but fools or knaves: but when the character of your probity is established, both good and bad will confide in you. Your enemies fear you greatly, and your friends love you in the same manner. As for you, with all your Proteus appearances, you never could make yourself beloved, esteemed, or feared. I own you were a great mountebank, but not a great man.

M A Z A R I N.

You speak of me as if I had been a coward: I shewed in Spain, while I carried arms there, that I did not fear death. This also appeared in the dangers to which I was exposed during the civil wars of France. As for you, 'tis well known that you were afraid of your own shadow, and fancied that there was some ruffian under your bed, ready to stab you. But perhaps you had those panics only at certain seasons.

Ridicule me as much as you please. For my part, I shall always do justice to your good qualities. You did not want courage in war: but you wanted courage, steadiness and greatness of soul in the management of affairs. You were pliable only through weakness, and for want of fixed principles in your mind. You had not resolution to deny a man to his face, which made you promise too easily, and afterwards elude all your promises by a thousand captious evasions. These evasions, however, were palpable, and unavailing; they screened you only because you were clothed with authority; and an honest man would rather you had told him plainly: I was in the wrong to promise you; and I find it out of my power to perform what I promised, than to have added, to the breach of promise, little shuffling subterfuges to play upon the unfortunate. It is not enough to be valiant in war, if one is weak in the cabinet. Many princes, capable of dying like heroes, have made themselves infamous, by their softness in the management of affairs.

MAZARIN.

It is an easy matter to talk thus: but when a man has so many people to please, he must amuse them as he can; one has not favours to bestow on all, yet all expect them, so that we are obliged to feed them up with vain hopes.

RICHLIEU.

We may give a great many people reason to hope, but we must deceive no body, for every one in his turn may meet with his reward, and even advance himself, upon some occasion or other, beyond what might have been imagined. As for

those who conceive unreasonable and ridiculous hopes, they deceive themselves. 'Tis not you who deceive them, but themselves ; and they have nothing to blame but their own folly. But to promise to their faces, and laugh at your promise as soon as their backs are turned, is a thing unworthy an honest man, and destructive to the reputation of business itself. As for me, I maintained and encreased the king's authority, without having recourse to any such wretched methods. The fact is self-evident, and you dispute with one who was a living instance of the falseness of your maxims.

END OF THE SECOND AND LAST VOLUME.





